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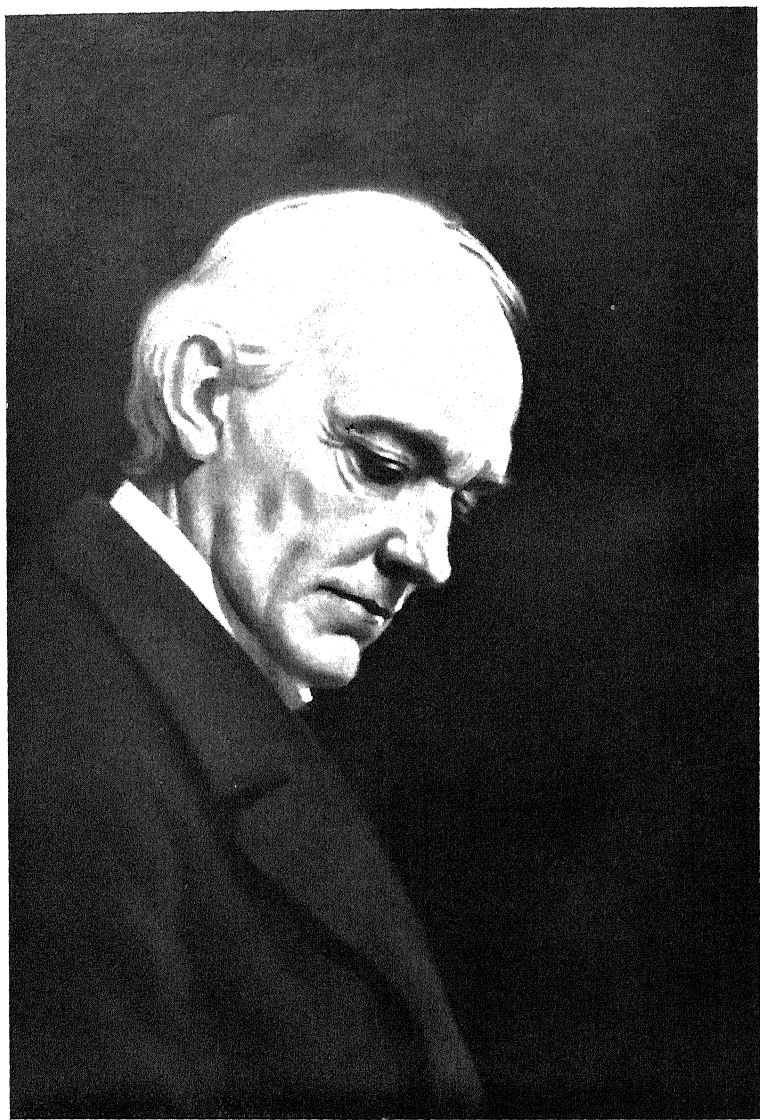
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*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

WAR DIARY

INTIMATE DIARY OF THE PEACE  
CONFERENCE AND AFTER





LORD RIDDELL.

Reproduced from a portrait by Miss Margaret Lindsay-Williams.

MORE PAGES FROM  
MY DIARY  
1908—1914

By  
LORD RIDDELL

LONDON  
COUNTRY LIFE LTD.

FIRST EDITION . . . *October 1934*

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## PREFACE

THIS diary begins in October 1908 and ends in July 1914, thus covering, more or less, the six seething years before the war. It is, therefore, the predecessor of my *War Diary* (published May 1933) and my *Intimate Diary of the Peace Conference and After* (published October 1933). Some of the entries may perhaps be regarded as of historical importance. As before, I have thought it necessary to make certain omissions. The profits will go to the Newspaper Press Fund.

R.

October 1934.





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During the period covered by this book the members of the Cabinet (appointed after the election of April 8th, 1908) were :

PRIME MINISTER . . . .	Mr. Asquith.
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER	Mr. Lloyd George.
HOME SECRETARY . . . .	Mr. Herbert Gladstone, <i>then</i> Mr. Winston Churchill, <i>then</i> Mr. Reginald McKenna.
FOREIGN SECRETARY . . . .	Sir Edward Grey.
SECRETARY FOR WAR . . . .	Mr. (afterwards Viscount) Haldane, <i>then</i> Colonel Seely, <i>then</i> Mr. Asquith.
SECRETARY FOR COLONIES . . . .	Lord Crewe, <i>then</i> Mr. L. Harcourt.
LORD CHANCELLOR . . . .	Lord Loreburn, <i>then</i> Lord Haldane.
PRESIDENT OF BOARD OF TRADE	Mr. Winston Churchill, <i>then</i> Mr. Sydney Buxton, <i>then</i> Mr. John Burns, <i>then</i> Mr. Runciman.
SECRETARY OF ADMIRALTY . . . .	Mr. McKenna, <i>then</i> Mr. Winston Churchill.
SECRETARY FOR INDIA . . . .	Lord Morley, <i>then</i> Lord Crewe.

The Government Whips were Mr. Alec Murray and Mr. Percy Illingworth.

## Chapter I

*Mr. Churchill's "passion for politics"—Education Bill difficulties—L. G.'s unemployment and pensions schemes—His opinion of Balfour, Morley and Asquith—General Booth's memory—The Tariff Reformers question Balfour.*

OCTOBER 1908.—Winston Churchill will be 34 in a few days. He is a remarkable person—quite a phenomenon. When discussing him, Lloyd George said (laughing) that he had never met anyone with such a passion for politics. Even at his wedding Winston commenced talking politics to L. G. in the vestry! L. G. says Winston has amazing industry. His valet calls him at 5 or 6 o'clock, and he then sits up in bed and writes articles, speeches, etc..

Hodder-Williams,<sup>1</sup> the publisher, says that when he went to see Winston regarding the publication of his book on Uganda, Winston remarked, "I talk about a great many things, but there is one thing I believe I do understand, and that is literature. I know a good book when I see it, and I know that this book is a damned bad one! It is too jerky!"

The Editor of the *Strand Magazine* paid Winston at the rate of £150 per article for the serial rights of his Uganda reminiscences.

I have struck up a friendship with Robertson Nicoll,<sup>2</sup> Editor of the *British Weekly* and a famous "literary gent." He is a remarkable old boy. His memory is wonderful, and he is a brilliant talker. He has great political influence and is much sought after by Liberal ministers.

When discussing Rosebery<sup>3</sup> with Nicoll, I remarked that many people said he was lazy. Nicoll showed me a letter extending over several pages he had just received from him. The letter dealt with Nicoll's life of his (N.'s) father. Rose-

<sup>1</sup> Later Sir Ernest Hodder-Williams; d. 1927.

<sup>2</sup> Later Sir William Robertson Nicoll, C.H.; d. 1923.

<sup>3</sup> The Earl of Rosebery; d. 1929.



bery received the book on his arrival from France at 10 at night. He read it and wrote a long letter criticising it the same night so that Nicoll received the letter the next day.

Nicoll told me he had received a long letter from McKenna<sup>1</sup> in his own hand-writing, dealing with criticisms in the *British Weekly* and putting his points before Nicoll. He also said he had had a long letter from Birrell<sup>2</sup> regarding the Irish Universities question.

Nicoll says that when the Church Commission was sitting, Lawson Walton<sup>3</sup> wrote asking for an appointment, as he wanted to discuss an important matter. They lunched at the Reform Club. Walton said he was much distressed about religious matters, and particularly as to what his attitude should be towards the Church of England. He had been reading the subject up and had grave doubts whether the Church should be attacked. He felt a difficulty as to the course he should take, as he was sitting on the Commission more or less as a representative of the Dissenters. N. did not disclose what advice he gave.

I had a long talk with F. H. Hamilton, formerly Editor of the *Johannesburg Star* and one of the Reform Committee imprisoned in Pretoria after the Jameson Raid in 1895. He said that he was one of the two who were sent out from Johannesburg to Cape Town to warn Rhodes that the Raid would be unsuccessful because, apart from the practical impossibility of organising secretly a commercial town on a semi-military basis, there was a deep and paralysing difference of opinion regarding what was known as the Flag question. Apparently reliable statements had been made that if Jameson reached Johannesburg he would raise the British Flag. This would have antagonised the bulk of the Transvaal population, and would have involved a wholesale breach of pledges given to a number of people. H. arrived in Cape Town on Saturday, December 28th, the day preceding the

<sup>1</sup> The Rt. Hon. Reginald McKenna, who had recently left the Board of Education to become First Lord of the Admiralty.

<sup>2</sup> The Rt. Hon. Augustine Birrell, Chief Secretary for Ireland, 1907-16; d. 1933.

<sup>3</sup> Sir John Lawson Walton, K.C., M.P., Attorney-General, 1905-8; d. 1908.

Raid. He saw Rhodes in the morning, and R. sent a telegram to J., telling him not to go on. H. saw Rhodes again in the evening at Grootteschuur. As a result of this conversation, R. was much perturbed, and sent another and much stronger telegram to J.. This he did not receive in time. H. said J. paid no attention to the first telegram because he thought it was intended by Rhodes to cover himself, or, alternatively, that he, or Johannesburg, or both, had had an attack of nerves at the last moment. H. says that the Flag question assumed an acute form because Rutherford Harris, Secretary of the Chartered Company,<sup>1</sup> who had just returned from England, definitely said that Chamberlain knew what was going on, but was insistent upon the British Flag being raised, to which Rhodes agreed. Johannesburg doubted Harris, but a letter from Flora Shaw<sup>2</sup> was produced which seemed to confirm him. It was due to this that Johannesburg decided not to move until Rhodes gave explicit assurances that there was no intention of raising the British Flag. These assurances Rhodes gave, but on the following day, the Sunday, Jameson crossed.

Nicoll said that Runciman, Minister for Education,<sup>3</sup> had written to him protesting against criticism by the Dissenters at the delay in settling the difficulties over the Education Bill.<sup>4</sup> R. said he was quietly negotiating for a settlement, and hoped to succeed.

Long talk with L. G. regarding unemployment. His idea is to form a board in each trade which will make a levy in prosperous times upon employers and workmen, and apply the sums contributed to alleviate distress in times of depression. His suggestion is that the Board should be formed of employers and workmen with an independent chairman.

Nicoll said that Birrell had written to him regarding the Education Bill, stating that he was still interested although

<sup>1</sup> d. 1920.

<sup>2</sup> *The Times* correspondent, who later became Lady Lugard; d. 1929.

<sup>3</sup> The Rt. Hon. Walter Runciman, President Board of Education, 1908-11.

<sup>4</sup> This Bill was a remodelled form of a measure introduced earlier in the year by Mr. McKenna. It proposed to make undenominational religious teaching compulsory in all rate-aided schools, and contained a scheme for a new allocation of the parliamentary grant.

he had left the Education Department. He asked Nicoll to dine with him on Sunday to meet Runciman. Evidently the object of the letter was to appease Nicoll and gain his support. I thought it rather clumsy. Nicoll told me it was practically settled that there was to be a conference on the education question, and that he was anxious to get Lord Rosebery made a member of it. He had evidently seen him on the subject. He said that Rosebery was very depressed at having fallen out of public life; and was complaining that no one took any notice of him nowadays, etc..

With Emsley Carr,<sup>1</sup> had a long talk with Willie Davies,<sup>2</sup> Editor of the *Western Mail*, who has been up in town seeing Lloyd George. He had an interview with him in his room at the House of Commons. Bonar Law<sup>3</sup> was there. They discussed the office Bonar would get if the Conservatives came in. He himself selected the Board of Trade, as it would have to deal with tariffs. L. G. pointed out that tariffs would be a matter for the Treasury, and that B. L. would have to become Chancellor of the Exchequer if he wished to deal with them. B. L. said he thought well of Austen Chamberlain, and feared Balfour<sup>4</sup> would endeavour to bring back all the old gang. Willie Davies also saw John Burns,<sup>5</sup> who told him he intended to abolish the Guardians of the Poor and that he had started by imprisoning some of them! W. D. congratulated him on his speech on the unemployment question and said it needed great courage. Burns replied, tapping himself on the chest, "I am full of guts."

31st.—Breakfasted with L. G. at Downing Street.

[When he was President of the Board of Trade, I frequently called to see him at Wandsworth Common, where he had a small suburban house, rental value about £65 per annum. It was furnished with no pretence to style. It seemed strange to

<sup>1</sup> Now Sir Emsley Carr, Editor of the *News of the World*, and a director of the *Western Mail*.

<sup>2</sup> Now Sir William Davies.

<sup>3</sup> d. 1923.

<sup>4</sup> The Rt. Hon. A. J. (later the Earl of) Balfour; Prime Minister, 1902-5; d. 1930.

<sup>5</sup> President Local Government Board, 1905-14.

see a Cabinet Minister living under such humble conditions. The furniture and appointments in the Chancellor's house at Downing Street are rather a scratch lot, got together by the Office of Works. L. G. told me that Sir William Harcourt, who was sensitive to cold, had all the windows in the library sealed up with brown paper and that notwithstanding this he used to sit working in his fur-lined overcoat. The dining-room, by the way, is built on what were formerly the stables. This was done in Mr. Gladstone's time, I understand.]

The Bishop of St. Asaph<sup>1</sup> came in afterwards. L. G. told me that the education question was practically settled on the lines of the Bill promoted by him and St. Asaph a few years ago. The Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Davidson) had promised support—also the Dissenters.

We talked of Balfour. L. G. said, "I could work with B., but his underlying sense of class superiority is the trouble with him. He is kind and courteous, but makes you feel that he believes he is a member of a superior class. This makes him unpopular with his own people like Bonar Law and Carson."

We talked of John Morley.<sup>2</sup>

L. G.: He is a great man, but curiously touchy and proud of his position. When Crewe was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland he gave a big party. Morley went—against his will for some reason. A lady who was with him said, looking round at the brilliant assembly, every man wearing decorations, "Well, now, Mr. Morley, are you not glad you came? Look at all these lovely dresses, jewels and decorations!" "Yes," replied M., "but the man with the black coat [John Morley himself, the Chief Secretary] rules them all!"

I told L. G. a hen-roost story in connection with his recent speech about robbing hen-roosts. He responded by repeating one told to him by Carson. A nigger, Sambo by name, was accused of stealing chickens. The chapel parson and deacon held an enquiry into his conduct and called evidence as to character. "Now," said the parson to one of the witnesses, "do you consider Brother Sambo is the sort of man who would be likely to steal chickens?" "No," said the witness, "I can't

<sup>1</sup> Dr. A. G. Edwards, later Archbishop of Wales (resigned July 1934).

<sup>2</sup> Later Viscount Morley; d. 1923.

say that, but if I were a chicken and Brother Sambo was around, I should roost high!"

We spent some time in looking over the plans of L. G.'s new house at Criccieth. He said he could not afford more than £1,200. He told me he was working on a contributory pension scheme, and was anxious to get Rosebery's assistance and also to consult the trade unions. I gave him some information about the latter and their organisation, and advised him to get into touch with the London Trades Council.

We talked of the future of the Labour Party. He said he and Winston thought the Labour Party managed the Unemployment Debate very badly and lack power.

L. G. says that John Morley is the most interesting person to talk to in the House of Commons. His prophecies concerning members invariably prove correct. L. G. says also that Balfour describes McKenna as "an able accountant," implying that he has an accountant's strength and weakness—accuracy and narrowness.

The Bishop told me that Constance Kent, who was convicted some years ago of the murder of her small brother, was the daughter of an inspector of schools, who was the natural son of the Duke of Kent, and therefore half-brother to Queen Victoria. Poor Constance was mentally deranged.

NOVEMBER 1ST, 1908.—Referring to the manner in which the Scotch are appropriating public offices, Tim Healy<sup>1</sup> remarked in the House of Commons, "God Almighty will not always be Scotch!"

2ND.—On the way to Downing Street on Saturday, L. G. said, "Gladstone came here at forty-three (I think he said) and remained on and off for twenty-two years."

R.: I dare say you will do the same, on and off!

L. G. (apparently with sincerity): No, I shall never last so long. I shall be dead long before that!

He asked me to arrange for Parke of the *Star* and self to breakfast with him on Wednesday, as he wants to explain his contributory pension scheme.

Donald of the *Daily Chronicle*<sup>2</sup> told me to-day that he is

<sup>1</sup> d. 1931.

<sup>2</sup> Later Sir Robert Donald; d. 1933.

breakfasting with Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Minister,<sup>1</sup> to-morrow. Spender, Editor of the *Westminster Gazette*, has been in close communication with Sir Edward and other members of the Cabinet during the recent Eastern crisis.

4TH.—I breakfasted with L. G., Parke, Masterman, M.P.,<sup>2</sup> and Harold Spender were there. L. G. gave an amusing account regarding the robes of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which are magnificent and costly. It is the practice for the incoming Chancellor to buy his predecessor's robes instead of getting a new set. L. G. bought Asquith's, but some Chancellors have declined to adopt this practice. For example, Gladstone declined to buy Disraeli's. Goschen declined to buy Randolph Churchill's. This very much exasperated the latter, who remarked, "Think of him, of all people, declining to buy old clothes!" [Goschen was a Jew.]

L. G. said that General Booth<sup>3</sup> had been to see him regarding a big scheme for South African colonisation, to which he wishes the Treasury to contribute. L. G. was much impressed with his dignity, etc.. He said that B. spoke in metaphors. For example, L. G. said, "How are you going to get the people?"—to which the General replied, "First you have to build the oven; then you have to heat it; you put the bread in afterwards." And again, "First you have to build the bridge. Perhaps for some time very few people cross over it, but they learn to use it. You must prepare the way first." L. G. took the General in to see Asquith, who was also much impressed. He said to Booth, "You met my wife some years ago. She told me all about it." The General at once said, "Yes, I remember. It was such and such a date. We discussed so and so." L. G. said it was evident Booth had a remarkable memory.

A friend of mine, who in his younger days lodged with the Booths, said that the General's methods were quite original. For instance, a solicitor called to see him one day to make a complaint about something the Army had done. When the

<sup>1</sup> Later Viscount Grey; d. 1933.

<sup>2</sup> The Rt. Hon. C. F. G. Masterman, then Parliamentary Secretary Local Government Board; d. 1927.

<sup>3</sup> Founder of the Salvation Army; d. 1912.

man of law entered the room the General went down on his knees and began to pray for him, which so disconcerted the lawyer that he gave way on all points.

L. G. said that Alfred Mond,<sup>1</sup> a clever man and himself a Jew, remarked very seriously when discussing L. G.'s German visit, "The mistake you made was to take a Jew with you"—the Jew being Sir Charles Henry, M.P., who does not look like a Jew, although he is one and is proud of it.

Horace Morgan, the book-binder, told me that Macmillans (the publishers) gave Winston Churchill £8,000 for the life of his father.

6TH.—L. G.: Chamberlain<sup>2</sup> said to E. A. Goulding, M.P.,<sup>3</sup> "Harmsworth<sup>4</sup> came to see me some time ago. He said, 'What will kill your policy [Tariff Reform], Mr. Chamberlain, is *anno domini*.'" Chamberlain continued, "But you see I am still here!" Very pathetic, as Chamberlain is paralysed.

In 1905, I introduced W. J. Bryan, candidate for the U.S. Presidency, to Chamberlain at Cardiff. I asked C.'s permission. He said, "Certainly, but he's a bit of a demagogue, is he not?" This was just before Chamberlain made his big Cardiff speech on Tariff Reform. Bryan sat with me during the speech, which he had come to Cardiff specially to hear. He told me he thought Joe a good speaker of the unimpassioned type. I had a chat with Chamberlain in the ante-room before the meeting. He seemed cool and collected, but I noticed that his hand was cold and clammy. I was amused at his concern for the safety of his hat and overcoat. I found what I thought a safe place. With great satisfaction he contemplated them being stowed away. He did not remember me at first. He said, "When did I meet you? I remember your face!" I said, "When we last met you gave me twenty pounds!" He laughed and replied, "I don't often give anyone twenty pounds. I remember now. I gave you twenty pounds for the *Western Mail* fund to take the Welsh Settlers from Patagonia to Canada. I wanted them

<sup>1</sup> Later Lord Melchett; d. 1930.

<sup>2</sup> The Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain; d. 1914.

<sup>3</sup> Now Lord Wargrave.

<sup>4</sup> Later Lord Northcliffe; d. 1922.

to go to South Africa, but we could not arrange it. Tell me, how are they doing?" He evidently has a fine memory.

The Tariff Reform people are busy. Bonar Law says, "They have put certain questions to Balfour, who has replied satisfactorily." But from what I hear, there is a movement against him in the party. On Wednesday, Goulding, who is said to be Joe's "Man Friday," invited thirty journalists who are said to be staunch on Tariff Reform to dinner at the St. Stephen's Club. Long,<sup>1</sup> Bonar Law and Austen Chamberlain were there, I believe. The guests sat at three tables, and at each course they moved round—a sort of progressive whist as applied to meals.

7TH.—Regarding a rather nasty article about him in one of the Sunday papers, Sir Samuel Evans, Solicitor-General,<sup>2</sup> remarked to me, "Of course I don't like it. But I don't really care. Asquith is my master. My business is to please him. If he is satisfied with what I do, that is what chiefly concerns me."

11TH.—Nicoll lunched to-day with Runciman, Minister of Education, who seemed very hopeful of settling the education question. He told Nicoll that when the Archbishop of York<sup>3</sup> resigned on Saturday week, he (Runciman) went to Asquith and said, "We must not be in a hurry to make the appointment." Runciman does not think St. Asaph will get the preferment. Curiously two of the Bishops (London and Stepney) who have been giving the Archbishop of Canterbury the most trouble in connection with the negotiations, have come over and are now supporting his proposals. The Archbishop of Canterbury is keen for a settlement. Nicoll told me that when his representative on the *British Weekly* went to see Dr. Clifford, the Nonconformist leader in the education struggle, he found him laid up with a bad cold, but busily engaged in looking through a book of newspaper cuttings containing his speeches on the subject.

19TH.—Lunched with Fuller, Junior Liberal Whip,<sup>4</sup> who said he thought the Government good for three years. Their

<sup>1</sup> Later Viscount Long of Wraxall; d. 1924.

<sup>2</sup> d. 1918.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Maclagan; d. 1910.

<sup>4</sup> Later Sir John Fuller; M.P. Westbury, 1900-11; d. 1915.



only fear was that Redmond<sup>1</sup> would move a Home Rule resolution, which would gain support from a large section of the party and thus cause a serious split. He seemed apprehensive regarding the Irish. He said that Lord Edmund FitzMaurice had told him the day before that the Lords would certainly throw out either the Licensing or the Education Bill.

Last night I dined at a *Country Life* dinner at Hudson's.<sup>2</sup> Charles Whibley told me some amusing things about Drummond Wolff,<sup>3</sup> whom he knew well. He said that Wolff hated Balfour like poison and was at no trouble to conceal his feelings. Wolff's father was a converted Jew, who married Lord Orford's daughter. The elder Wolff went to Palestine to convert the Jews. He used to support his propaganda by a species of play in which he represented Joseph, his wife, Mary, and the baby Wolff (afterwards Sir Drummond) the Infant Christ! A curious start for a distinguished political career.

Asquith's speech on the Education Bill negotiations was written out beforehand and approved by the Cabinet. He used the phrase, "Both the Church of England and Nonconformist bodies have given us the assurance that so far as their authority and influence go, they will *ex animo* (with heart and soul) acquiesce in the settlement and give their support to its being brought into effect." Sir Charles Dilke remarked that the best chance of getting both parties to agree is that they do not understand what *ex animo* means!

When speaking at a meeting, the Bishop of London is said to have remarked, "It used to be said that the way to Hell is paved with good intentions, but nowadays it is paved with wine, women and motor-cars!" Voice from the audience: "Then the sting of death is past!"

24TH.—Breakfasted with L. G., who did not seem at all disturbed by the fate of the Licensing Bill. He said that a thanksgiving service would take place in the Treasury at 10.30, as he was looking forward to taxing the trade. He ridiculed the rumour that the Peers would or could interfere with or reject the Budget.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. John Redmond, the Irish leader; d. 1918.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Edward Hudson, Chairman of *Country Life*.

<sup>3</sup> The Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff; d. 1908.

27TH.—Breakfasted again with L. G., and played golf with him all day. He said that Winston and F. E. Smith,<sup>1</sup> had been with him one night recently until 1.30 a.m.. We discussed the reason why lawyers are not more successful as politicians. He said they fail to impress the public mind because their training robs them of that mental distinction necessary for public success. He spoke in high terms of Asquith, saying he had a remarkably clear, forcible mind, and that his defects were due to a legal training, which had curbed his imagination and vivacity.

[Some years ago I briefed Asquith to apply for a license for the Stratford Empire Music Hall. The Stratford Town Council treated him with slight respect. Several Councillors called out, "What's the gentleman's name?" Asquith was much surprised. When we got outside he remarked, "Well, it is interesting to see what we have created. I never thought it was like this!"]

We discussed the forthcoming Suffragist meeting at the Albert Hall, at which L. G. was to be the principal speaker. He said that interrupters should be dealt with in the most drastic manner, as if they were men. He related his experiences at pro-Boer meetings, and said that the best chuckers-out were the young teetotallers, who made short work of roughs.

Discussing tact, L. G. said that his grandmother was a clever, amusing old woman, and very tactful. She and his uncle kept a boot shop. She used to take L. G., as a boy, to the farm-houses when she went to collect the accounts. The visits were ostensibly social, but the farmers would ask what they owed and express anxiety to pay. The old lady would deprecate the necessity for payment, but on being pressed would produce her list of debtors, and always went away with the money!

<sup>1</sup> Later Earl of Birkenhead; d. 1930.

## Chapter II

*Sir George Lewis's memories of Parnell—£5,500 for a piece of silver—The Westminster Gazette loses £10,000 a year—L. G. and the Suffragettes—Mrs. Langtry's story of Disraeli—Famous authors and their fees—The Naval Scare—Winston rehearses a proclamation—The Carnarvon Investiture—L. G.'s Agadir speech.*

DECEMBER 8TH, 1908.—I met Boxall,<sup>1</sup> who latterly acted as solicitor to the late Duke of Edinburgh,<sup>2</sup> and for his services was made a Baron of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. The Duke had a varied career. He was at one time associated with a young engineer called Bourne and with the latter's partner in several business concerns. The Duke, however, did not prove himself a good business man, largely due to being over-trustful.

Sir George Lewis, the famous solicitor,<sup>3</sup> who acted in the Parnell Commission, told me that Parnell was the most suspicious man he had ever met, and that it took him a long time to gain his confidence. Just before the Commission opened Parnell visited Sir George at his house at Walton-on-Thames. Sir George drove him to the station at night. Noticing how suspicious he was, Lewis said when they shook hands at parting, "You can rely on me. I shall observe your confidence and treat you as if you were my own brother." Sir George at once saw that this observation was a great mistake. Parnell was more suspicious than ever. Sir George thought Mrs. O'Shea unattractive, and could never understand why Parnell was so much under her thumb. Sir George should be a good judge of feminine attractions, considering his vast experi-

<sup>1</sup> A well-known London solicitor; d. 1927.

<sup>2</sup> H.R.H. the late Prince Alfred Ernest Albert, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, 1st Duke of Edinburgh, 2nd son of Queen Victoria. Born 1844; d. 1900; married in 1874 the Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrovna, only daughter of the Emperor Alexander II of Russia.

<sup>3</sup> d. 1911.

ence in the Divorce Court. He said he was very highly strung, and that many of the big trials in which he had been engaged had been a great tax on him. He mentioned the Colin Campbell case in particular, which lasted twenty-four days. On the last day he felt his head would split.

We discussed letter-writing and the facility which comes from experience—how much more quickly an experienced man can make up his mind and deal with business than an inexperienced one. We agreed that the transaction of business is delayed by the difficulty in coming to decisions. If a man has the knack of making quick decisions, he can get through an enormous amount of business in a short time.

9TH.—My partner, Jackson, the silver collector,<sup>1</sup> recently purchased a cup called the Cressener Cup from Col. Tufnell, an Essex banker, for £5,500, the highest price yet paid for a piece of silver. He has now sold it to the Goldsmiths' Company. They are to keep it in their private museum. The price per ounce is enormous and unprecedented. J. tells me that the Tufnells were unaware of the value of the Cup, and that it had stood unprotected on the sideboard in their dining-room for years.

10TH.—Fuller, the Junior Whip, told me to-day that three members of the Cabinet are in favour of an early dissolution, among them L. G. and Winston. He said that the Cabinet meeting yesterday was gloomy, and that Asquith is much distressed concerning the Education Bill.

11TH.—W. G. Grace<sup>2</sup> and I went to Chatham to visit the *Inflexible*, the new warship of which his son is Commander. It was wonderful to see the boyish manner in which W. G. (now 60) climbed about.

Had dinner with Nicoll, who said he had had a letter from Runciman, Minister for Education, written at 12 o'clock on the night previous to the day when the Education Bill was withdrawn, in which he said, "I still have hope." Next day he received a telegram from Runciman saying, "The Bill is dead." Quick work. They are evidently much afraid of Nicoll.

<sup>1</sup> Later Sir Charles James Jackson; d. 1923.

<sup>2</sup> The famous cricketer; d. 1915.

Interesting talk with Sir George Newnes.<sup>1</sup> He says President Roosevelt (Theodore) told him he considered Morley's *Life of Gladstone* one of the most remarkable books in the English language. It had entirely altered his views of Mr. Gladstone and Home Rule. Before he read the book he doubted Gladstone's honesty of purpose in promoting the Home Rule Bill and was an anti-Home Ruler. Morley had changed his opinion of both topics. He now saw that the necessity for Home Rule had been forced upon Gladstone by fifty years' experience of Irish administration.

16TH.—The Liberal Party owe Sir George Newnes a good deal for having founded and carried on the *Westminster Gazette*. It has cost him £180,000. He sold it in October last for £40,000 and £20,000 shares in a new company. It was losing £10,000 per annum. The sale was arranged through the Liberal Whips.

The circulation is only about 25,000, but the *Westminster*, as it is called, is most influential. Alfred Spender, the Editor, is a journalistic star, whose leading articles are religiously read by thinking people of all parties—indeed, the leader is the *Westminster's* chief feature. Spender is in close touch with Asquith and Edward Grey, and on political matters one of the best-informed men in the country. He is an excellent writer. The *Westminster's* trouble is that the said thinking people don't appeal to the advertiser, so that the revenue from advertisements is inadequate.

Massingham,<sup>2</sup> Editor of the *Nation*, and formerly editor of the *Daily Chronicle* and *Daily News*, told Nicoll that Mond, chairman of the new *Westminster Gazette* company (a wealthy Jewish manufacturer), is interfering with editorial policy. He says that Spender favoured postponing a Parliamentary dissolution for two or three years, but that Mond pressed him to take a strong line about the House of Lords and to advocate an early appeal to the country. Massingham says Spender finds his position difficult and irksome, and not nearly so happy as under the old régime with Newnes. Nowadays the hand behind the editorial throne is potent.

<sup>1</sup> Founder of George Newnes, Ltd., publishers; d. 1910.

<sup>2</sup> H. W. Massingham; d. 1924.

Nicoll suggests that Massingham should reproduce his Parliamentary sketches in book form, and call it "The Wearing Down of Arthur Balfour"—not a bad title.

Called at Downing Street and saw Mrs. Lloyd George. She says that Lady Maclaren, chairman of the Albert Hall Suffragette meeting, wanted to stop it owing to the violent row, but L. G. insisted on going on. I hear that he has declined to allow any women to attend his meetings in future, because several of the Suffragettes were spanked by the men at the Albert Hall!

I asked Mrs. L. G. what L. G. would like for a Christmas present. He has given me a gold cigarette-case. She subsequently wrote saying he wanted a watch, as the one he has is a bad timekeeper. Therefore I gave him a watch and chain like my own—a good timekeeper.

17TH.—I see that Beasley, hero of the celebrated Taff Vale case which caused a revolution in the relations of capital and labour and led to the passing of the Trades Disputes Act, is to be manager of the amalgamated Taff, Bute & Rhymney Railways and Docks if the Amalgamation Bill passes. When the Taff won in the House of Lords, a fund of £10,000 was subscribed by the employers for Beasley, but there is no doubt that he just stumbled into the law case without appreciating the important issue that might be raised—the question whether a Trade Union could be sued. As things turned out, the employers should have given him £10,000 not to bring the action!

27TH.—L. G.'s Liverpool speech has made the upper and middle classes furious. It is strange how these episodes recur. It was the same with Chamberlain. Look back at 1880!

To Cornwall with Hudson of *Country Life*. He has a wonderful flair for fine printing, architecture, gardening, furniture and decorations, and has gathered round him a noble band of contributors, including Lutyens, the architect, William Robinson and Miss Jekyll, the apostles of modern gardening, Horace Hutchinson, Avray Tipping, etc.. The influence of *Country Life* on public taste has been remarkable. The founding of the paper was originally due to my directing Hudson's

attention to certain American developments in printing. I have been one of the directors for some years.

JANUARY 19TH, 1909.—Called on Mrs. Langtry,<sup>1</sup> who says that the big dressmakers always supply her with frocks at 75 per cent. discount, as she is such a good advertisement. She told me that Disraeli looked like an old Jew covered in diamonds. When she was introduced to him he asked her what he could do for her. She replied, "Give me two dresses for Ascot," which he did. He remarked, "You are a clever woman. You say straight out what you want." She said she had dictated 70,000 words of her reminiscences but did not like the look of her handiwork. Her ideas looked very different on paper from what she had anticipated. She is asking £2,500 for the American rights in her book. Hall Caine got £6,000 for the English and American serial rights of *The White Prophet*, now appearing in the *Strand*. Conan Doyle received £675 for the serial rights of the short story, *The Pot of Caviare*.

Nicoll told me a story about John Morley. Birrell called on Morley one day when he was writing his *Life of Gladstone*, and said, "I have just been reading some letters of Carlyle. What a letter-writer he was!" Morley pointed to a big deed box and said, "I have to go through the contents of that to-day. It contains nothing but Gladstone's letters to his family on his first trip abroad. Great man as he was, he never wrote a letter worth publishing, and Carlyle never wrote one not worth publishing!"

Nicoll says that J. M. Barrie's father was a weaver, and a most enthusiastic politician. When his son became successful and provided the old man with a yearly income, he gave up his trade and devoted himself to advocating Gladstone's claims. If he heard that anyone had spoken ill of his idol, he would call on him and endeavour to convert him from his heretical opinions.

Nicoll told me that his firm had practically agreed to purchase Marie Corelli's new novel for £7,500. He said they sold 130,000 copies of her last book. She will not publish in serial form, and thereby loses a great deal.

MARCH 25TH, 1909.—I have written little lately, having

<sup>1</sup> Lady de Bathe, the actress; d. 1929.

been very busy. The Naval Scare is at its height. I had a long chat with L. G.. We spent the day together. He said that Admiral Sir John Fisher<sup>1</sup> is clever and persuasive. When he wants to carry a point he gives technical details which seem overwhelming. He is a great man, but too prone to make the pace, so that other nations are urged to do more than they would otherwise.

L. G. spoke freely of the permanent officials at the Treasury. He said some are able and others weak, but none can make suggestions for meeting a really big crisis.

I asked him if he ever slept in his room at the House of Commons. He said, "No. There are no locks on the doors. I am always being worried by callers." He says he has Chamberlain's old room. The only ornament is a map of South Africa which Joe used to consult during the war. I thought of L. G.'s Birmingham exploits at that period! What a kaleidoscope life is!

JUNE 25TH, 1909.—My knighthood announced—recommended by Asquith and Pease. Of course I received the usual letter from Mr. A. several days ago. L. G. surprised.

JULY 22ND, 1909.—To Buckingham Palace to be knighted. The ceremony very well arranged. I met an amusing old boy who had come to get an honour. I had never seen him before. He said, looking round and pointing to the soldiers and sailors, "There are a lot of men here who have shed their blood for their Sovereign, but I believe I am the only one whose blood the Sovereign has shed! When I came here in Queen Victoria's time, her hand trembled so much as she pinned an honour on my breast that she dug the pin deep into my chest so that my shirt was covered with blood!"

[On July 30th Mr. Lloyd George delivered his celebrated Limehouse Speech, now almost forgotten. It created a tremendous sensation, and marked a break with the past which in these days it is difficult to appreciate. I have therefore given some extracts from it in an appendix.]

NOVEMBER 9TH, 1909.—Have been urging L. G., Pease and others to recommend Nicoll for a knighthood. To-day it is announced. The old boy very pleased.

<sup>1</sup> Later Lord Fisher; d. 1920.



JANUARY 1910.—Some little time before the General Election this month, Lloyd George asked me to give him my estimate of the result. He said, "Write it down," which I did and gave him the paper. He told me he was getting up a little sweepstake and I gave him 5s. as my contribution. He said there were about a dozen in the sweepstake, including the Premier. My estimate proved correct within, I think, two places, so I divided the money with L. G., whose figures were the same as mine.

OCTOBER 1910.—Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, Robertson Nicoll, Professor Henry Jones of Glasgow University, Stuart Paton and Horace Morgan dined with me. L. G. said Arthur Balfour was a man of honest character but dishonest mind, which remark reminded Professor Jones of one concerning Gladstone—"his conscience was his accomplice and not his guide." L. G. said that he and Asquith considered Sir Robert Peel the greatest statesman (especially in finance) of modern times.

MARCH 1911.—Winston did not attend the Asquith lunch at the Opera House. The Prime Minister felt hurt that all his political family were not there. L. G. discussed the subject with Winston, who said, "If I had known it was to be a sort of Lord's Supper, I would have attended." L. G. replied, "Yes. Even Judas Iscariot was present at the Lord's Supper!" Of course this was intended only as a joke. There is no question as to Winston's loyalty and devotion to Mr. A..

MAY 1911.—Robertson Nicoll told me this. At a Club dinner at which he was present, the psychology of criminals was the subject for discussion. In his speech, Charles Mathews, the Public Prosecutor,<sup>1</sup> related a tragic experience. When at the Bar, he succeeded in securing the acquittal of a distinguished literary man charged with a serious offence. The man came to him afterwards, said he was guilty, and asked what he should do. Mathews said, "Nothing." The man subsequently committed suicide. Nicoll at once recognised the case, wrote the name of the man on a card, and handed it to Mathews, who looked very surprised.

JUNE 1911.—Winston describes L. G. as the greatest

<sup>1</sup> Sir Charles Mathews; d. 1920.



#### BUDGET DAY.

Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd George, Mr. Churchill and Mr. (now Sir William) Clark, the Chancellor's private secretary, on their way to the House.



political genius of the day. He says L. G. has more political insight than any other statesman. He told me that he and L. G. had resolved upon the necessity for a constructive social policy, and that L. G. has selected and "imported" with great skill from Germany (1) the labour exchanges, (2) the sweated trades wages scheme, (3) the Insurance Bill and (4) the Unemployment Bill.

Spent the day with L. G. and Winston at Walton Heath. It was too hot to play golf in the afternoon. Winston showed us the programme of the forthcoming investiture of the Prince of Wales at Carnarvon, and recited the Proclamation which he had to make on behalf of the King—a long, involved document. He declaimed well, and had evidently made a careful study of the wording.

There was considerable discussion as to what emphasis should be placed upon the words "Know ye." Winston gave us three or four different renderings.

JULY 1911.—Long talk with Winston, L. G. and Masterman about political speeches. They agreed that Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg oration was one of the best political speeches ever delivered—the one containing the phrase "Government of the people, by the people, for the people," etc.. [This phrase, by the way, was "lifted" by Lincoln from one of Robespierre's speeches—R.] They said that when addressing the House of Commons, a speaker finds it difficult to bear in mind the great audience outside. His whole inclination is to address the audience he sees before him and feels behind him. They referred with strong approval to verses by A. H. Clough, which had been quoted by Sir Edward Grey, beginning, "Say not, the struggle nought availeth," and containing the lines:

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,  
Seem here no painful inch to gain,  
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,  
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

Lord Walter Lennox,<sup>1</sup> at one time Lord Salisbury's<sup>2</sup> secretary, says that Lord S. was often very curt. During the

<sup>1</sup> d. 1922.

<sup>2</sup> d. 1903.

South African War, the Duke of Norfolk called at the Foreign Office to see Salisbury. The secretary said he had just gone. The Duke: "I wanted to see him to tell him I am resigning my position as Postmaster-General and going to South Africa to join the Army on Monday." The secretary, very excited, rushed after Lord S., whom he caught in the quadrangle. He exclaimed, "The Duke of Norfolk has just called to say he is resigning his office as Postmaster-General and going to the front on Monday." S. replied, with much frigidity, "Oh, is he? I suppose we shall have Lord Cross [then 77] going to the front on Tuesday."

Sir John Murray Scott, Sir Richard Wallace's executor, told Hudson of *Country Life* that when Lady Wallace died he secured an interview, after some trouble, with Lord Salisbury, then Premier. Scott said, "I have an important communication to make to your Lordship. Lady Wallace has bequeathed the Wallace Collection to the nation." Salisbury's only remark was, "I will communicate the information to my colleagues. It will prove an expensive bequest. Good morning!"

13TH.—Attended the Investiture at Carnarvon—very impressive; a wonderful mixture of Royalty, Romance, Religion and Radicalism. Winston did his part splendidly and proclaimed the Prince in fine style.

We had to wait for two hours. The heat was terrific. I sat opposite Arthur Balfour. Wrapped in deep thought, he gently but continuously drummed with his hand on the ledge in front of him. I wonder what he was thinking about?

[Some years later I reminded him of the incident and said I had wondered what he was thinking of so intently. A. J. B. (laughing): "I can tell you. I remember quite well. I was wondering from minute to minute how much longer I could stand the dreadful heat!"]

21ST.—Winston told me that L. G. is to make a big declaration on foreign policy at the Mansion House dinner to-night. We arranged that after the dinner, to which I have an invitation, I shall go to Winston's house in Eccleston Square and report on the proceedings. L. G. was half an hour late. All sorts of rumours were on foot as to the cause of this

unprecedented unpunctuality on the part of the chief guest at a Mansion House banquet. Some ignorant members of the company went so far as to express the opinion that L. G.'s non-appearance was a piece of bad manners to be expected from a Radical Chancellor of the Exchequer. Perhaps they went home believing this, as the speech aroused little comment at the dinner, where its importance was not realised by the general company.

L. G. told me afterwards that the delay was due to a conference with Asquith and Grey as to the precise terms of the speech. I congratulated L. G. and told him that he had performed a great national service, as the speech would show the Germans that Radicalism was not inconsistent with nationalism.<sup>1</sup> He seemed pleased.

SOME DAYS LATER.—At the Prime Minister's garden party L. G. took me aside and told me that the German Government had endeavoured to get him dismissed or "declassed" because of his speech, and that the German Ambassador had been much surprised when told that it was the voice of the Cabinet and not of Lloyd George alone.

ON THE FOLLOWING DAY.—I called at Downing Street, where I found L. G. holding a conference on the Insurance Bill in his garden. Ramsay MacDonald, the Labour leader, and some Government officials were seated with him under a tree. It was a very hot day. I asked him to give me a few minutes. I said, "Can I make public the facts as to your attempted dismissal?" He said, "Yes, it is just as well the nation should know what the German attitude of mind is.

<sup>1</sup> The speech contained the following passage: "I believe it is essential in the highest interests, not merely of this country, but of the world, that Britain should at all hazards maintain her place and her prestige amongst the Great Powers of the world. Her potent influence has many a time been in the past, and may yet be in the future, invaluable to the cause of human liberty. . . . I would make great sacrifices to preserve peace . . . but if a situation were to be forced upon us in which peace could only be preserved by the surrender of the great and beneficent position Britain has won by centuries of heroism and achievement, by allowing Britain to be treated, where her interests were vitally affected, as if she were of no account in the Cabinet of Nations, then I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country like ours to endure."

The policy of the jack-boot won't do for us. I am all for peace, but am not going to be jack-booted by anybody."<sup>1</sup>

AUGUST 1911.—Winston told me that in the night it had occurred to him that our ammunition stores were practically unprotected. He had telephoned to the War Office giving instructions that, in view of the German crisis, they should be guarded by soldiers. Curious that no one should have thought of this before!

As we were driving home from Walton Heath, Winston pointed to the teeming population in the streets and said, "I wonder what they are mostly interested in?" I said, "Earning their living and football." I told him about the immense sales of the football editions and the great interest in pigeon racing. I mentioned that on some Saturdays in the summer £2,000,000 worth of birds were in the air. He said, "I must tell the Prime Minister about the pigeons."

He spoke enthusiastically of the day when the working classes would live in fine blocks of dwellings with central cooking and heating, swimming baths, etc., subsidised by the State or municipality. I responded, "I think most people prefer a comfortable little house of their own. They don't like being herded together, nor do they like interference and dictation."

10TH.—I went to the House of Lords to listen to the debate on the Parliament Bill.<sup>2</sup> Asquith has threatened to create four hundred new peers if the Lords refuse to pass the Bill. Winston tells me that I am one of the four hundred. The proceedings were exciting. I sat in the Gallery—very hot. The House was packed, all the lame, halt and blind having been dug up for the occasion. The atmosphere was electric and the speeches vigorous. The question

<sup>1</sup> The announcement was not generally believed until November, when the German Chancellor stated that representations as to Lloyd George's undiplomatic intervention had been made by the German Government to the British Government.

<sup>2</sup> This reduced the duration of Parliament to five years and deprived the House of Lords of the power of rejecting or altering Bills certified by the Speaker as Money Bills. Other Bills might be rejected twice, but if a Bill was sent up for a third time it was to be automatically submitted for the royal assent.

**August 1911]**

MORE PAGES FROM MY DIARY

was how would the Bishops go. Lord Stamfordham,<sup>1</sup> the King's Secretary, arrived. It was obvious that he was negotiating with the Archbishop of Canterbury and others. A man sitting next to me said, *sotto voce*, " I think the old boy's going to fail " (referring to Stamfordham), and for a time it looked as if he were, but eventually, having won over the ecclesiastical contingent, he emerged from behind the Throne with a smile on his face. The Lords passed the Bill.

<sup>1</sup> d. 1931.



## Chapter III

*Winston goes to the Admiralty—Asquith announces manhood suffrage—Bonar Law succeeds Balfour—His view of political friendships—A rift between Asquith and Balfour.*

NOVEMBER 1911.—For the past twelve months I have usually played golf with Winston twice a week. He is a charming companion, full of witty, amusing, unexpected sayings—never dull, never tedious. I find him a most considerate and loyal friend. He is also kind-hearted. The other day we came across a worm on the golf-course. Winston tenderly picked it up and placed it in the bracken, saying, "Poor fellow! If I leave you here, you will be trampled upon by some ruthless boot!"

Many people think that Winston and Lloyd George are only surface friends, but this is not the case. They act in the closest co-operation, and appreciate and admire each other's powers. I asked L. G. whether he and Winston made a practice of consulting together. L. G. replied, "Of course!" Then he added, laughing, "Very often I hear him come stalking down the hall at Downing Street, and then I see him put his head inside the door and look round the room. I know from his face that something has happened, and I always say, 'What's wrong now?'"

During the recent strikes Winston had a difficult job which caused him much anxiety. He was freely criticised by the Press and certain of his colleagues. The situation weighed upon him, and obviously he was very unhappy at the Home Office. Nevertheless, like all public men, he frequently alleged that, being concentrated on his job, he was not concerned with his critics. One day when we were sitting talking together at Walton Heath, he pulled a book out of his pocket and said, "Have you ever studied *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*? It has a lot of good things in it." He then read the verses which run:

As I look from the isle, o'er its billows of green,  
 To the billows of foam-crested blue,  
 Yon bark, that afar in the distance is seen,  
 Half dreaming, my eyes will pursue:  
 Now dark in the shadow, she scatters the spray  
 As the chaff in the stroke of the flail;  
 Now white as the sea-gull, she flies on her way,  
 The sun gleaming bright on her sail.

Yet her pilot is thinking of dangers to shun—  
 Of breakers that whiten and roar;  
 How little he cares, if in shadow or sun  
 They see him that gaze from the shore!  
 He looks to the beacon that looms from the reef,  
 To the rock that is under his lee,  
 As he drifts on the blast, like a wind-wafted leaf,  
 O'er the gulfs of the desolate sea.

Thus drifting afar to the dim vaulted caves  
 Where life and its ventures are laid,  
 The dreamers who gaze while we battle the waves  
 May see us in sunshine or shade;  
 Yet true to our course, though our shadow grow dark,  
 We'll trim our broad sail as before,  
 And stand by the rudder that governs the bark,  
 Nor ask how we look from the shore!

On a Friday at the end of October, I think it was, he said, "I am going to tell you a great secret; only four people know it—the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, Alec Murray (the Chief Whip)<sup>1</sup> and myself. I am going to the Admiralty." He added, "You must tell no one." I gave him my word, and congratulated him. He said he meant to make the Navy even more efficient than it is at present.

On the following Saturday, Lloyd George, Winston and I played golf. As we were washing in my room, Winston, who was drying his hands, turned to L. G., who was covered with soap-suds, and remarked, "I have told him the secret." I said I thought the move was excellent and that the Prime Minister had exhibited great skill.

L. G.: Well, I think I am entitled to the credit. I went to Archerfield [where Asquith was staying] in August, and told the Prime Minister that we must make the change.

[For reason for change, see my *War Diary*, p. 13.]

<sup>1</sup> Later Lord Murray of Elibank; d. 1920.

EARLY IN NOVEMBER.—I had lunch with Alec Murray, and a long talk over the political situation. He said the P.M. was about to make an important announcement. On the following day came the P.M.'s statement regarding manhood suffrage. Murray told me that the matter had been much discussed and that Mr. A. had not really made up his mind until he heard the arguments of Silvester Horne,<sup>1</sup> leader of the Parliamentary deputation. I subsequently saw L. G., who confirmed what Murray told me. L. G. said that the whole of the Prime Minister's training made it difficult for him to take such a step, and that while he was heartily in sympathy with the people, yet he had the lawyer's fears of the uneducated. L. G. added, "This will be one of the greatest changes which has taken place for many years." I gathered from what he said that the Prime Minister had deliberated a great deal, and that up to the last moment L. G. and Murray were doubtful whether he would take the plunge.

A few days afterwards, I again saw L. G.. Meanwhile Balfour's resignation had been announced. I mentioned that the papers attached more importance to this than to manhood suffrage, but that the one was an event of only temporary importance, whereas the other would affect the country in a marked degree for all time. I said it was curious that the proposed addition of 4,500,000 voters should have attracted so little comment. L. G. agreed, adding that no one could forecast the result of the addition to the electorate, but it was obvious that in future what are called "the lower classes" will exercise more power than they have done. As he put it, "The future lies with them."

I told L. G. that I had been to see Bonar Law, the new leader of the Conservative Party. I commented upon his modest, kindly ways.

L. G.: The Conservatives have done a wise thing for once. They have selected the very best man—the only man. He is a clever fellow and has a nice disposition, and I like him very much. He has a good brain.

A few days before Bonar Law's appointment he drove me home from a dinner in his motor. He said, "I think that

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. C. Silvester Horne, M.P. for Ipswich; d. 1914.

within two years we (the Conservatives) ought to be in again." We talked about unrest among the working classes. We agreed that the people must have more wages and meant to get them.

On the Saturday, when his appointment was provisionally announced, I called upon him immediately after breakfast. He lives quietly, just off Kensington High Street. The maid took me straight to the dining-room, where I found him reading the *Daily Telegraph* in the midst of his family. His home has no pretensions and is characteristic of the man. It was curious to find the future leader of the Conservative Party living in this quiet middle-class way. The house and its appointments are simple and comfortable—no expensive furniture or fittings. He spoke frankly. He said that he had not sought the office, but that Balcarres,<sup>1</sup> the Whip, had asked him whether he would accept it if unanimously appointed. He said, "I had great doubts as to what I ought to do, but felt that unless I accepted I should tacitly admit that in the future I was not a candidate for the highest office and was not prepared to accept this position. So, with some hesitation, I accepted the offer."

We discussed the relations between political leaders. He said, "While I consider there is no reason why political leaders on opposite sides should not have friendly feelings to each other, the public do not understand that you can oppose a man's views and at the same time be friendly with him." He added, "Personally, on the whole, I think these political friendships have been carried too far and have caused suggestions of insincerity which does not really exist, but it pays to avoid the appearance of evil. I like Lloyd George. He is a nice man, but the most dangerous little man that ever lived."

We spoke about "The Other Club"—formed in the early part of the year by Winston and F. E. Smith to bring together men of different views and vocations. The Club is a dining club and comprises Lloyd George, Winston, Bonar Law, F. E. Smith, Jack Seely,<sup>2</sup> Lord Knollys, Lord Kitchener, the Mar-

<sup>1</sup> Now Earl of Crawford and Balcarres.

<sup>2</sup> Now Lord Mottistone.

guess de Soveral,<sup>1</sup> Northcliffe, Buckmaster, Anthony Hope Hawkins, Max Aitken,<sup>2</sup> myself and others.

Bonar Law said, "I think the Club will have to be disbanded. I don't think it wise to continue it."

He said that he had accepted the office of leader only on the understanding that he should continue his life in his own way. He added, "I like my golf. It keeps me in good health, and I don't mean to give it up."

I told him I had heard there was a serious rift between Asquith and Balfour, and that B. was annoyed at something Mr. A. had done. I suggested that the quarrel was due to F. E. Smith's having been made a Privy Councillor by Mr. A. against Balfour's wishes, and to Asquith's having allowed Balfour's views to become known. Bonar Law said this might be so. He had seen the correspondence in which Balfour pointed out that while he agreed as to F. E. Smith's ability and prominence in the party, he thought these honours should be given for past services only, and not to new men.

Early in November Alec Murray came to dinner with Robertson Nicoll and me. Murray had asked me to arrange a meeting with Nicoll so that he could take N.'s advice regarding a new Education Bill. We had a pleasant dinner. Nicoll advised against a new Education Bill, and urged that the Government should proceed with the Disestablishment Bill. He said that if a new Education Bill were brought in at the present time it would look as if the Government were singling out a class for vindictive treatment. He also advised that no steps should be taken in the matter of Scottish disestablishment as he thought the two Churches might perhaps come to an agreement. This, he said, would be a triumph for Christianity. Murray said he fully agreed with Nicoll as to the Education Bill and would convey his views to the Cabinet.

Murray told me that the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, Winston, Sir Edward Grey and Haldane<sup>3</sup> were all working together and bound together by the strongest ties of friendship and mutual agreement. He said, "This makes the Cabinet

<sup>1</sup> Formerly Portuguese Minister; d. 1922.

<sup>2</sup> Now Lord Beaverbrook.

<sup>3</sup> Viscount Haldane; Secretary for War, 1905-12; d. 1928.

very strong, as any one of these men is able enough and strong enough to be Prime Minister."

I told him I thought that notwithstanding this galaxy of talent the Government stock was going down just now. He said he thought so too.

About a fortnight ago I spent the evening with L. G.. In the course of conversation he remarked, "I can truthfully say that I have no animosity against anyone. If I feel annoyed with anyone, I always make a point of speaking of his good qualities. I find that cures one of angry and malevolent feelings better than anything else. By continually referring to a man's good points, you come to appreciate them and to think less of his bad qualities."

One night when L. G., Winston and Robertson Nicoll dined with me we had a discussion on the ethics of suicide. L. G. and Winston both expressed the view that in certain circumstances—incurable disease or disgrace—a man is entitled to take his life. Nicoll strongly denied this, and, apart from religious considerations, insisted upon the necessity, in the interests of the race, for battling to the end. Neither side was convinced.

One of the judges told me that a young girl recently sentenced to death was reprieved on the understanding that the Suffragettes would name a lady who would take charge of her. A prominent Suffragette was nominated for this office. A letter was written to the lady, asking her to take the girl out of prison, but it transpired that in the meantime the lady herself had been convicted for rioting, and was then in prison, so that the girl was being detained pending the release of her future guardian—a Gilbertian situation.

Winston says he cannot describe his feelings when on active service as a soldier—the sense of complete detachment from the rest of the world and the absence of thought for the morrow. He said that if this country became engaged in a great war it should be carried on by a joint ministry, and that if such an event took place during the present Liberal administration, Balfour and one or more prominent Conservatives should be invited to join the Government.

## Chapter IV

*A great estate in difficulties—The birth of the Insurance Bill—  
L. G. assaulted by a suffragist—Orangemen threaten Winston—  
The future of the Labour Party—The Coal Strike.*

DECEMBER 2ND, 1911.—I discussed with L. G. the violent opposition to the Insurance Bill. He said he had never been daunted or frightened by opposition from his opponents. He added, "When I started this Bill, I knew I should lose a certain number of adherents. Every general who goes into a campaign knows that he must lose men. Losses are usually a necessary incident to victory."

L. G. commented strongly on the want of humour displayed by women publicists and, laughing heartily, related the following:

**DISTINGUISHED LADY ORATOR:** The Insurance Bill would destroy the beautiful intimacy between master and maid.

Some days ago I had breakfast with L. G. and J. M. Barrie. They have the same shaped heads. Robertson Nicoll noticed this also. I have had several chats with Alec Murray, who admitted that he was feeling worn out and that the pace nowadays was too great. I told him that Percy Illingworth,<sup>1</sup> his co-Whip, was absolutely tired out and suffering from severe nervous strain, due to late sittings, etc.. He admitted that the Session had been very trying.

7TH.—Two unreported incidents during Lady Frances Balfour's suffragist campaign in Lancashire: At her meeting in St. Helens—centre of the window-glass industry—her chairman remarked that he was all in favour of the militant Suffragette movement, and had no objection to window breaking. The speaker being the most important window-glass manufacturer in the district, this observation was received with laughter and loud applause.

At another meeting, the vote of thanks was proposed by

<sup>1</sup> d. 1915.

an elderly clergyman, a fine-looking man, who said he was strongly in favour of votes for women and had been blessed with one of the best of wives. He turned round and made a slight bow to his wife, a stout, elderly lady. He went on to say that although in favour of votes for women, he was opposed to votes for married women. "In fact," he remarked, "they already have the vote. I always do as my wife tells me, and the same remark applies to all husbands blessed with wives such as mine." He bowed again to his wife—and fell to the floor, dead!

Lady Frances thinks Arthur Balfour will not return to politics unless the Conservative Party or the country is visited with some great crisis in which he thinks he can be of signal service.

Lady Sackville says that the Sackville law-suit cost them £40,000, and that to provide the expenses they had to sell the "Linley" picture, which fetched £37,000. It is now in Pierpont Morgan's collection. She says they find it a great struggle to keep up Knole (Kent) with its 356 rooms, 52 staircases and 545 windows. It covers four acres and is really a museum open to the public. She tells me that the death duties will be a great strain and will involve the deportation to America of more works of art. Unfortunately the late Lord Sackville died six months before the last Finance Act came into operation, so that the section enabling the Commissioners to remit the Legacy Duty on objects of national interest does not apply. I drew up with her a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pointing out that having regard to the nature of Knole and to the use made of it by the public, the charge for duty should be mitigated. She mentioned that Pierpont Morgan is always pressing her to sell some of the best things at Knole, but she means to hold out as long as she can. The property goes to Lord Sackville's brother and then to his nephew. She said that when King Edward was at Knole he wanted to sleep in the room slept in by King James, but Lady Sackville told him that it could not be managed and that he must sleep in the room occupied by Queen Victoria. King Edward said in French, "You are right. You are a brave little woman to stand up for your beautiful room."



Drove home from the Other Club with Winston and Seely. W. said, "Grey had to omit from his speech on the German question the only important thing, namely, that so long as Germany continues her shipbuilding programme, so long shall we regard her with suspicion and distrust. Our alliance with France is our only possible course under the circumstances."

I omitted to note that in the summer, when the German crisis was at its height, General Botha<sup>1</sup> cabled that in the event of war he was prepared to raise and lead an army to take possession of German East Africa.

8TH.—Had a talk with the Bishop of London.<sup>2</sup> Very angry about Silvester Horne's statement that the Church of England is "a pagan church." Asked me what I thought of such a "disgraceful statement." I said I thought it uncalled for and discourteous. He said, "I have always striven to promote Christian amity, but such statements make it difficult to maintain a brotherly attitude." I did not suggest a repetition of the golf match between the Bishop and his clergy and the Free Church ministers captained by Silvester Horne which I arranged earlier in the year. [Horne subsequently explained that he had been misreported.]

9TH.—I told L. G. of my conversation with Winston, with whom he agreed. L. G. spoke in bitter terms regarding the German attitude.

I hear that Fisher has been constantly with Winston on the Admiralty yacht, and that the new Admiralty appointments have been instigated by him. If Beresford<sup>3</sup> learns this he will alter his attitude to Winston very quickly. I mentioned the matter to L. G. and Masterman. L. G. evidently thought the rumour correct.

12TH.—Beresford is on the warpath. He has delivered a rather violent attack on the Admiralty, Winston and McKenna.

Nicoll and I spent three days at Hythe with L. G.. His

<sup>1</sup> The Rt. Hon. Louis Botha, Premier and Minister of Native Affairs, South Africa; d. 1919.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Winnington-Ingram.

<sup>3</sup> Admiral Lord Beresford; d. 1919.

throat is bad and he speaks with difficulty. He said he had experienced great pain and thought it was something terrible, but the doctors assured him that the disease was only functional. We had great difficulty in preventing him from talking. He was full of his insurance scheme, which he roughly outlined. He was working on and off with his assistants, one of them Braithwaite, a nice man who has lived in the East End amongst the poor and has been to Germany to investigate the working of the German insurance scheme. The plan will involve an enormous amount of officialism and State interference, but it may be worth it. L. G. told me that Asquith had been his chief ally in regard to the Budget. L. G. asked to see him in reference to his Budget proposals. A. replied, "Come to my room at such and such a time." L. G. went and explained his super-tax, land values and licensing proposals, while A. walked up and down the room. When he had finished, A. said, "That will do. You are the most resourceful man I have ever met." L. G. said that A. strongly supported the scheme in the Cabinet, and that to begin with he and Winston were practically his only supporters.

Nicoll and I went to hear L. G.'s Insurance Bill speech. The House of Commons was a wonderful sight. The Tories were almost as enthusiastic as the Radicals, and treated L. G. as if he were the saviour of mankind. Arthur Balfour all smiles and cordiality. One Tory interrupted by a question. The Tories were indignant. L. G. expostulated gently and asked to be allowed to reply to the erring brother, but there were loud cries of "Go on with your speech!" Nicoll remarked as we left the House, "The Tories will regret their proceedings of to-day before many weeks have gone. They have given away the whole show and acted like idiots. L. G. called his Bill a non-party and non-controversial measure. We shall see."

A South African journalist told me a good story. When Cecil Rhodes died, another South African millionaire was supposed to be endeavouring to take his place, and rumours were put about that Rhodes's mantle had fallen upon him. One day he called upon a Jewish merchant in Johannesburg, who said, "They tell me, So-and-So, that Rhodes's mantle

has descended upon you. Let me give you a little advice. Years ago I was in the old clothes trade. There is always one difficulty about old clothes. They never fit!"

17TH.—On Saturday L. G. was violently assaulted by a male suffragist. I called to see him this morning. He had a little cut on his eye, and told me that he had been stunned by a leather case bound with metal which had been thrown through the window of his car. He said he thought the act had been committed in a moment of excitement. The case contained papers which enabled the police to trace a man, now in custody. L. G. left me to see the detectives.

We subsequently had another chat. He referred in bitter terms to the fact that those responsible for financing the suffrage movement were engaging bravoos to inflict personal injury upon members of the Government. He said that the people who should be prosecuted were the people who found the money and employed these men. I asked him why the Suffragettes were attacking him, as he had declared himself strongly in favour of votes for women. His explanation was peculiar. He said they were attacking him "because they thought he was a little devil who had a knack of getting things through, and that if stimulated he would secure the vote."

18TH.—Murray rang me up to wish me good-bye before he went abroad. He said he hoped he would see me in the South of France, where a villa had been lent him. It was at Cap Martin. His party would consist of the Prime Minister, L. G. and Rufus Isaacs.<sup>1</sup>

19TH.—I met Winston. Evidently much perturbed. He was on his way to see L. G.. He said, "What has made him take up this attitude on the Suffrage question? He will smash the Government. It is most serious."

I saw L. G. to wish him the compliments of the season. He said he hoped I would go to the South of France and that they could give me a bed at the villa.

JANUARY 1912.—Winston told me a good story about a submarine. He said that by accident it dived to the bottom—

<sup>1</sup> Now the Marquess of Reading; Solicitor-General, 1910; Attorney-General, 1910-13; Lord Chief Justice, 1913-21; Viceroy of India, 1921-6.



[Photo : Elliott & Fry.]

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (1911).



170 feet. The pressure was such that it was impossible to force the water out of the chambers for the purpose of reaching the surface, the valves being constructed so as to prevent the access of more than a certain quantity of air. The lieutenant and crew with great presence of mind and courage set to work to alter the valves so as to admit more air. Then came the anxious moment, as the fear was that the great inrush might burst the chambers. To use Winston's words, "British material and workmanship stood the test, and the submarine made her way to the surface."

21ST.—Much public excitement about Winston's forthcoming Belfast speech in support of Home Rule. The Orangemen threaten all sorts of things. Drove W. to Walton Heath and spent greater part of the day with him. He said he should go to Belfast and make his speech, but should offer to hold the meeting in another hall if one were available, as he saw no object in causing a riot about such a trivial matter. (The Orangemen strongly object to the meeting being held in the Hall first selected.) He thinks the Unionists are anxious to show that their threats of civil war are sincere. I asked what L. G. thought about the meeting. W. replied that they were to dine together this evening to discuss that and other matters. He said the Germans were going to extend their naval programme, which would make his task as First Lord easy.

31ST.—Met O. E. Dickinson, who has been appointed Secretary of the Lunacy Commission. He is a friend of McKenna. He said that McK. is very angry at having been ejected from the Admiralty, and bitterly complains of the treatment he has received. He says that Winston wanted the job and Asquith weakly gave way.

FEBRUARY 2ND, 1912.—Called to see Winston. Found him dressing. He spoke vehemently regarding his projected visit to Belfast, pointing his observations with his safety razor. He said that the forthcoming session was likely to be one of the most violent on record. He referred bitterly to Sir Edward Carson,<sup>1</sup> and said he had been stirring up trouble. He told me that Mrs. Churchill was going with him to Ireland.

<sup>1</sup> Now Lord Carson.

6TH.—L. G. said, laughing heartily, "We all hate the suffragettes for spoiling our speeches, but they make Winston very bitter because they ruin his perorations. They might just as well cut Diana's throat. (Diana is Winston's charming little daughter.) His perorations, prepared with the utmost care, are completely wrecked and spoiled by squeaky voices calling out, 'Mr. Churchill! What about votes for women?' "

L. G. says he is not so keen as he was on Women's Suffrage. He is confident they will get some sort of suffrage, but is determined it shall not be a measure giving a preference to one party. The vote must be given to all women or to none—not only to wealthy women who will vote with the Conservative party.

7TH.—Lord Aberdeen<sup>1</sup> tells Nicoll that his son-in-law, Lord Pentland, is giving up the Irish Office and taking a post in India. N. says that for some years he and Pentland dined together every Wednesday, but when P. was made a Whip the practice was discontinued, as he (P.) thought misunderstandings might arise should Nicoll happen to publish information not obtained from Pentland, but which the Party might think had been so obtained. I said, "Perhaps he was wise. Such misunderstandings are easily created."

NICOLL (laughing): But the dangers were not all on his side. Under a pledge of secrecy he might have given me information which I had received from another source and was about to publish. A situation of that sort is very awkward for a journalist. Under such circumstances it is difficult to escape from a suspicion of breach of confidence.

Aberdeen told Nicoll that Customs and Excise are the great Irish snags, and that the Irish National Convention might decline to accept a Bill in which these were not handed over to the Irish Parliament. Redmond and other Irish leaders were willing to accept a Bill leaving Customs and Excise under the English Parliament, but the question was whether they could control the Convention.

10TH.—L. G. and Masterman said that John Burns is very critical regarding some of his colleagues.

Winston returned from Belfast at 6 a.m.. I breakfasted

<sup>1</sup> Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1905-15; d. 1934.

with L.G.. Donald was there. L. G. said Winston had rung him up to enquire what he thought of his speech at Glasgow (advocating a strong Navy and calling the German Navy a luxury).

L.G.: I told him I thought it imprudent and calculated to mar Haldane's mission to Germany, which was on a fair way to success.

R.: The speech might be useful to Haldane as showing that British overtures are not due to cowardice or unreadiness, and that British naval developments are the natural outcome of a long-settled policy extending over the past 200 years, and are not directed against Germany and German aspirations.

L. G. would not agree to this view.

Later we went to Walton Heath. L. G., Winston, Mrs. Winston, Masterman, Donald and self. We played a three-some—L. G. and W. one ball, Masterman and Donald one, and Mrs. W. and I one. More talk than golf. Mrs. W. said that at Belfast she was not afraid of being killed, but feared she might be disfigured for life by the glass of the motor being broken or by some other means. She said that Winston was not nervous and that the opposition and threats seemed to "ginger him up." The Suffragettes gave them more trouble than the anti-Home Rulers, as they disturbed their sleep both on the boat and on the train. Winston threatened to smash the face of one of the male tormentors who forced his way into their compartment on the train.

Talked of Chamberlain with L. G. and Masterman. M. said that C. wore pince-nez and side-whiskers in his early days. Later on he adopted the eyeglass and orchid, and shaved off his whiskers. To the last he wore elastic-side spring boots of the early Victorian style.

R.: That was sensible. He thus saved himself the trouble of buttoning or lacing his boots.

13TH.—Sat next to Beerbohm Tree,<sup>1</sup> who told me that he had asked Croker, the Tammany Boss, what his *modus operandi* was. Croker said, "I never talk. When I says 'Yes' it always happens, and I always look well after the boys."

<sup>1</sup> Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, the actor; d. 1917.



15TH.—Long talk with L. G. about social questions. He said he thought improvements in the condition of the people would take place very slowly. I remarked, "The joint stock system is partly to blame—inflated capital, so-called goodwill and the rest, upon which dividends are expected."

I asked him if he thought an attempt would be made to regularise wages by Act of Parliament. He said he thought this would be the trend of the Labour movement, but did not believe in the practicability of the scheme.

In the course of conversation, F. E. Smith waxed very angry on the suffrage question, and said that he and Walter Long had told Bonar Law that they would resign from any Government which proposed to give the franchise to women.

17TH.—Donald told L. G. and me that he had received a letter from John Burns strongly criticising L. G..

Long talk with L. G.. We spoke of political agitation.

L. G.: When you find, as I did, that the House of Commons is apathetic and lifeless, you must stir public opinion by violent means, so that the public will react upon the legislature.

We talked of the dangers of success and the inability of many men to carry corn.

L. G.: You often see that a man who has attained a position by the exercise of certain characteristics ceases to display them in his new circumstances and then becomes a failure—like a soldier who has won a victory by his skill with the rifle, but abandons it for some other weapon which he does not understand and cannot use.

L. G. spoke highly of Asquith's speech at the opening of Parliament. He said it was a splendid performance and that he had smashed Bonar Law.

Later we met Bonar on the links. L. G. and he had a friendly little chat.

22ND.—Long talk with Masterman and Sir Henry Dalziel,<sup>1</sup> M.P. for Kirkcaldy.

M. contended that the Labour Party would make but little progress politically, and that the working classes

<sup>1</sup> Now Lord Dalziel.

would continue to vote Liberal. He instanced Llanelly, where two men were shot during the strike riots last August, but where a Liberal Member has just been elected in a by-election. He said that Macnamara, Financial Secretary to the Admiralty,<sup>1</sup> had said when the shooting took place, "No Liberal will be elected in Llanelly for twenty years." This prophecy had proved quite wrong.

I said, "The working classes are determined to have a greater share of the profits of industry, and will eventually turn to the political machine to accomplish their purpose."

M. replied that I overrated their desire for more money, and that their well-being could be secured in other ways, although he did not underrate their determination for more wages.

Dalziel said that Labour would be the predominating political force in ten years, either under the name of the Liberal Party or some other name. He instanced the enormous growth of trade unionism in his own constituency and the improved organisation of trade unionism all over the country. Masterman seemed rather staggered and said, "We are talking like people must have talked before the French Revolution."

24TH.—I forgot to say when writing about the Carnarvon Investiture that when Mr. and Mrs. L. G. were at Buckingham Palace shortly before the event, this conversation took place:

THE KING: When are you coming to teach that boy of mine Welsh?

[The Prince of Wales had to say a few words in Welsh at the Investiture.]

L. G.: Whenever your Majesty thinks proper. I have not been invited.

THE KING: You don't need an invitation. Come whenever you like.

L. G.: I shall be glad to give the lesson at an early date.

The Prince had his lesson. L. G. said he developed quite a good accent.

25TH.—Saw L. G. and discussed the impending coal

<sup>1</sup> The Rt. Hon. T. J. Macnamara; d. 1931.

strike.<sup>1</sup> He said the men had presented their case well at the conference, but he felt that the delegates, with the exception of Robert Smillie, the Scotch representative, were not now the real active forces of the movement, and that the fighters were the younger men such as Hartshorn.<sup>2</sup> I told him of Hartshorn's article in the *Clarion*. He asked me to send him the paper so that he might read the article before the adjourned conference on Monday, when the younger leaders are to be present. I told L. G. of my talk with Masterman, Dalziel and the others. He said Masterman had already told him about it, and that M. thought Dalziel exaggerated the strength of the Labour Movement.

Regarding this, L. G. remarked, "I wonder!"

27TH.—Met the Archbishop of Canterbury<sup>3</sup> and Sir George Askwith, the Industrial Commissioner,<sup>4</sup> at lunch. We talked of the coal strike. Sir George had come straight from the conference between masters and men. He said he doubted if there would be a settlement. The Archbishop said he was engaged to speak at Derby during the next few days, but thought he would cancel the fixture as he did not like speaking at such a time.

I said, "This is just the time when your Grace should speak. What do you think, Sir George?"

Askwith said, "Undoubtedly the position is very serious and will be more so unless the gentlemen of England bestir themselves."

I said, "Don't you think the gentlemen of England should see that the lower orders are adequately remunerated and better housed?"

The Archbishop looked surprised.

Sir George said, "If there is a strike, there will be terrible bloodshed in South Wales, I fear."

<sup>1</sup> Called to enforce the payment of a minimum wage. The strike became general on March 1st, when 800,000 men left their work. It lasted until April 8th, the miners then agreeing to resume work pending the fixing of minimum wages by district boards set up under the Coal Mines (Minimum Wage) Act.

<sup>2</sup> Later the Rt. Hon. Vernon Hartshorn, President, South Wales Miners' Federation; d. 1931.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Randall Davidson; d. 1930.

<sup>4</sup> Now Lord Askwith.

*February 1912]*

MORE PAGES FROM MY DIARY

The Archbishop looked more surprised.

Drove with Askwith to the Board of Trade. He said the public did not appreciate the amount of labour unrest in the country. I asked him whether he did not think the people were determined upon more wages to spend in their own way, and that doles would not satisfy them.

He answered, "Yes."

## Chapter V

*The miners demand a minimum wage—"The death-knell of the Liberal Party"—A memorandum for the Prime Minister—The Whitaker Wright drama—Growing Labour unrest—A holiday visit to the Asquiths.*

MARCH 2ND, 1912.—Went to Downing Street. Found L. G. at breakfast with the Attorney-General (Sir Rufus Isaacs), Harold Spender and P. W. Wilson of the *Daily News*. They asked me what I thought of the strike. I said, "The biggest thing that has taken place for years—the beginning of an industrial revolution." They said the men had put themselves in the wrong by declining to return to work now that the principle of the minimum wage had been conceded. I replied that the men say they mean to settle first and return to work afterwards, and do not intend to be jockeyed as the railway-men were jockeyed in August.

I added, "We live in stirring times. The people mean to have a greater share of the profits of industry."

L. G.: I for one am not sorry. *Asquith's declaration for a minimum wage sounded the death-knell of the Liberal Party in its old form.*

N.B.—This strike has evidently staggered the Cabinet. They never believed that Labour would assert itself in this way. They have helped to uncork the bottle containing the *djinn*, thinking they could control and direct the "spirits" when released. But the "spirits" have their own ideas and will not be led or controlled by Government doles. They want more money, which means more freedom.

L. G. and I went to look at the Prime Minister's windows, which had been broken by the Suffragettes the night before. We both thought it a strange sight.

To return to the Archbishop. He talked of A. C. Benson, the writer. The Archbishop said, "Benson can write more easily than anyone else. He never hesitates, blunders or

corrects. He publishes too much—far too much—and writes twice as much as he publishes. Writing is a mania with him.”

I said, “Do you read him?”

The Archbishop laughed and said, “Oh yes—nearly every week!”

6TH.—Coal strike in full swing. Had Hartshorn, the Welsh miners’ leader, to dinner. Long and interesting talk. Very nice man. Not at all violent. Blind in one eye. Evidently has a great gift for figures. In conversation fond of conjuring with decimals. Miners’ wage rates horribly complicated. H. has unusual powers of lucid explanation.

7TH.—By request of Sydney Buxton, President of the Board of Trade,<sup>1</sup> called on him regarding the coal strike. Saw him, Llewellyn Smith<sup>2</sup> and Askwith. All very pleasant. They are evidently dealing with the subject in the usual formal, official way. I wrote to Buxton saying that if the principle of the minimum wage is conceded, the men will discuss the schedule of wages. B. replied that he appreciated my point, but in effect could do nothing. L. G. says the matter is being badly handled by the Board of Trade, but that the Prime Minister is doing well, and that he quite affected the delegates when he described the perils and dangers of the miner’s life. L. G. says that the P.M. is becoming more kindly and genial every day, and that they are the very best of friends. He spoke critically of John Burns.

14TH.—L. G. telephoned asking me to see him immediately. Found him in his bedroom evidently very unwell and much worried. He said he thought things were going badly in reference to the strike, and that some effort must be made on other lines to bring about a settlement. He had told the Premier that the whole Trinity would not persuade the Scotch and Welsh mine-owners to settle, that the only chance of a settlement was to arrange matters with Smillie and Hartshorn, and that he had suggested I should see Hartshorn. I sent for him, and he came to my house in Queen Anne’s Gate at 9 p.m.. He told me that the conference had been engaged in the hope-

<sup>1</sup> Later Earl Buxton; d. 1934.

<sup>2</sup> Now Sir Llewellyn Smith, Permanent Secretary to Board of Trade, 1907-19.

less task of investigating wage schedules and that the investigation would take months. After considerable discussion, at 1 a.m. I wrote a memorandum embodying proposals for a settlement, and setting forth reasons for breaking up the conference and dealing with the matter by legislation. Hartshorn said he would support the scheme, and thought the other leaders would do the same.

[Later on it was embodied in the Miners' Minimum Wage Act, with certain additions.]

15TH.—Took memorandum to L. G.. Found him in bed very feverish and unwell. He said he had been ordered away by the doctor. I read the memorandum to him. He said it was splendid and that he would take it to the Prime Minister at once. I went off to Walton Heath, but was telephoned for, as the Prime Minister wished me to be in attendance. I found L. G. at lunch. He said the P.M. was delighted with the memorandum, and had had it typed and circulated and was going to act on it.

We talked of the Seddon murder case.<sup>1</sup> L. G. said that Rufus Isaacs did not mean to take another murder prosecution as this one had worried him so much. Isaacs said that Seddon had not appreciated the effect of his cross-examination, but that when Isaacs made his speech, Seddon saw he was trapped.

On the following day I met Marshall-Hall,<sup>2</sup> who defended Seddon. He said Rufus Isaacs had written him a charming letter congratulating him on the conduct of the case. He said Isaacs did the case well.

L. G. says Lawson Walton told him that after the verdict in the Whitaker Wright case,<sup>3</sup> he took Wright into a consultation room at the Law Courts to discuss the possibilities of revising the verdict and sentence. Whitaker Wright discussed

<sup>1</sup> In which Frederick Henry Seddon, a London insurance agent, was found guilty of the murder of Eliza Barrow, a middle-aged spinster, by arsenical poisoning.

<sup>2</sup> Later Sir Edward Marshall-Hall, K.C.; d. 1927.

<sup>3</sup> Whitaker Wright, an English mining engineer who had spent many years in America, began to float public companies in London in 1889. On January 27th, 1904, he was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude for issuing a fraudulent balance sheet.

the matter calmly, and lighted a cigar, which he smoked happily for some time. Then he asked for a drink of water, threw away the cigar he was smoking and lighted another. Then he fell back. Walton thought he had fainted. He was dead. Walton had no doubt that he had secreted the poison in a tabloid under his tongue and that he took the water to dissolve it. Walton said the event shocked him terribly and seriously injured his health.

Rufus Isaacs, who had prosecuted Whitaker Wright, was at a consultation with a solicitor and an actress when his clerk gave him the news. He told me that he was terribly upset and could not proceed with the consultation. At first he thought that Wright had died from natural causes and that he had helped to kill him. He was much relieved, curiously enough, when he heard he had committed suicide. He thought Wright guilty.

Waited at Downing Street till the evening when the Premier made a statement that he would on Tuesday introduce a Bill substantially in accordance with the memorandum prepared by me. Hartshorn came to see me again and I spent several hours with him. He said that the Bill must provide for a 5s. minimum wage, subject to increase by the local wage boards. He asked me to communicate this to the Government, which I did by letter on the following day. As he went away he said, "The only thing I envy people with money is a good cigar. Has it occurred to you that during the two nights I have spent at your house I have smoked a day and a half's miner's minimum wage at the rate of 7s. per day? That makes you think, doesn't it?" He said that his grandfather had been a miner for sixty-five years, from 5 years of age to 70, and that his father had also been a miner, but being a very hard worker, had broken down at 45. He said with pride that he himself had been the best workman in the colliery where he worked, and that when he became a check weigher he earned more money than any other check weigher in the coalfield.

18TH.—L. G. and Hartshorn met at my house. We had a long discussion. Hartshorn pressed very strongly that the Government should include in the Bill a definite provision that 5s. and 2s. should be paid as minimum.



L. G.: The Cabinet cannot agree to fix wages by statute. The fixing of the minimum must be left to the Board to be set up under the Act. A vital question of principle is involved.

R.: The main question of principle seems to be the enactment of a minimum rate, however it is to be fixed. But I agree that the insertion of a specified minimum in the Act differs from saying that there shall be a minimum, to be settled, after due enquiry, by some authority other than Parliament.

L. G.: Yes. It is not Parliament's business to settle rates of wages. Parliament has not the necessary knowledge.

HARTSHORN: The conference will not accept the Bill unless it contains this provision. If they do not accept, the men will not return to work.

L. G. stayed until nearly 12 o'clock. Hartshorn stayed on. He said that the masters and men could hold out longer than the country, that in three weeks' time there would be something like a revolution, and that the men would then decline to return unless the wage schedules were included in the Bill in their entirety. He seemed very gloomy about the position. I discussed with him other threatened strikes, and the failure of the Government to take steps to deal with Labour unrest.

19TH.—Called on L. G.. Found Rufus Isaacs awaiting him. I pointed out that the Bill, as drafted, seemed to contain nothing but a pious declaration that a minimum should be paid.

Later I had a long talk with L. G. and told him what Hartshorn had said as to the 5s. and 2s.

L. G.: If that happens, we shall use every means at our disposal. We shall declare strike pay illegal, and if necessary imprison the leaders.

I said I thought this would be the end of the Liberal Government. I told L. G. of the serious position as to Labour generally, and urged that it was the duty of the Government to put aside Welsh Disestablishment and similar matters so as to formulate some plan of action which would put an end to strikes, and in particular ward off the threatened transport workers' strike in May. L. G. said he would communicate this to the Prime Minister. He further told me that he could work up no enthusiasm about Home Rule or Welsh Disestablish-

ment, as his whole mind was now bent on the Labour question, which had developed in an alarming and unexpected fashion.

SUNDAY, 24TH.—This has been one of the most exciting weeks I remember. Public feeling regarding the coal strike has been worked up to the highest pitch. The Bill has been held up by the refusal to include the minimum of 5s. and 2s.. No one knows what will happen on Monday.

On Thursday I called on the Prime Minister. I told him there would be no settlement unless the 5s. and 2s. were included. He said he would see what could be done. He seemed worried, and walked rapidly up and down the room. He was, however, genial and kind. I apologised for troubling him. He said he was much indebted, etc..

On Friday Mr. A. said he would not give way, as a question of principle was involved.

Yesterday I lunched with L. G., Rufus Isaacs, Masterman and Harold Spender. All terribly worried about the miners. L. G. said that under the circumstances, and to avoid more trouble, he had strongly supported the inclusion of the 5s. and 2s.. He seemed worn out, physically and mentally. He said he would like to postpone the Budget until after Easter. He will have to take care or he will break down altogether. Masterman told me McKenna was opposed to the insertion of the 5s. and 2s. minimum, because he thought it would lead to competition between Parliamentary candidates in mining districts at election times, and that the votes would go to the candidate who made the highest bid for increasing the minimum wage. Masterman added, " McKenna sits for a mining constituency, and we have twenty more."

I said, " The objections to Parliamentary interference with wages are only too obvious, but we are facing a new era and must make the best of it."

L. G.: The Prime Minister would not have proposed the Minimum Bill had he not been obliged to act hurriedly. I got up, put on a dressing-gown and slippers and went into the P.M.'s house (there are private doors between the two houses) and gave him your memorandum. He adopted it at once. During the past week all sorts of influences have been

brought to bear. Having gone seven-eighths of the way, he has now stopped short.

Masterman made the same remark as we drove away.

I said, "Mr. A. is really an old-fashioned Radical of the Manchester school, who is leading a heterogeneous band of followers in which the more active groups are bent on breaking up the traditions of his party."

[COMPILED FROM NOTES MADE IN 1910-11.]—

In August 1910 and September 1911, when James Braid, the professional golfer, was staying with me at Gullane, Haddingtonshire, by invitation we spent a day at Archerfield House, North Berwick, with the Prime Minister and Mrs. Asquith. We played golf on the Archerfield links—perhaps the most attractive private links in the world. On both occasions Braid partnered Mr. A. in a foursome, which gave him much satisfaction. Braid lunched with the party, which included on the first occasion A. J. Balfour's sister, Lady Raleigh, and her husband. Braid sat next to Lady R.. They appeared to find plenty to chat about. The P. M. and Mrs. A. were most kind and hospitable. In 1911 Mrs. A. took me to see her husband's portrait, which was being painted in the house. She made him sit as if he were posing for the artist and arranged his hair with evident pride. The P.M. talked of his sons, and remarked that the Bar was still the best career for a young man of ability with small means. He added that such a career had political possibilities. I said, laughing and pointing to Mr. A., "That is obvious." He smiled grimly at the compliment. Miss Elizabeth A., aged about 14, talked in high-sounding periods somewhat in her father's House of Commons style. Thus:

A VISITOR: How did you get on with Lord Kitchener?

Miss E. A.: Very well, but there was a good deal of misapprehension regarding our relations—I should have said relationship. But there, I don't like soldiers.

THE VISITOR: I am sorry to hear you say that. Why not?

Miss E. A.: I think it most unsatisfactory that strong, able-bodied men should spend the whole of their lives preparing for a contingency which most likely may never occur!

An amusing incident took place on one of our visits. When we arrived we found the family on the links. The small boy Anthony invited his mother to run a race. She at once set off at great speed. When she returned some part of the trimming of her dress came off. The P.M. picked it up and handed it to her, whereupon she said to her son, "It would be awkward if my dress came off." The small boy made the witty answer, "Very awkward for *us*, mother!"

MARCH 27TH, 1912.—Walked with L. G. and Rufus Isaacs in St. James's Park. They both agreed that a serious mistake had been made in not inserting the *5s.* and *2s.*. They were evidently much perturbed regarding the new situation created by the modern Labour Movement. L. G. said, "I am afraid this may be the knell of the old Liberal Party. It has done splendid work, and though the counsels of its wealthier members may have been allowed to prevail too much, yet I do not know whether the Party which will succeed it will not possess defects of a more dangerous character."

L. G. asked me to do what I could to get the men back to work. He said that the South Wales mine-owners had acted badly. He complained of the manner in which the men had acted, but said the Government had offered to insert the *5s.* and *2s.* if the men would undertake to return to work, but they had declined to give this undertaking.

Later in the day I saw Hartshorn, who told me this was not correct, and that the men had not understood the Government's proposals, which had been inadequately explained by Enoch Edwards. He said that the conference had passed a resolution which had annoyed the Premier, who in a hasty moment had made a statement in the House of Commons from which he could not withdraw with dignity, and that this had occasioned the whole of the trouble. He said that the result of the ballot was very doubtful.

[The Cabinet declined to include the *5s.* and *2s.* minimum. The whole story appears in the newspapers, so I will not repeat it here.]

30TH.—Long talk with Masterman. Asked him how Ramsay MacDonald had done during the coal strike. He said, "Not very well. He is a nerve-wracked man. It is a tragedy

that the lives of three of the men who have been facing each other day after day during the crisis have been saddened by the same cause—the death of a wife—Bonar Law, Sir Edward Grey and Ramsay MacDonald. I have watched them. They are all obviously miserable and struggling with an ever-present sorrow.”

[I remember the day after Mrs. Ramsay MacDonald died (September 9th, 1911), I called at Downing Street and found R. M. with Lloyd George and others seated in the garden discussing some pressing Labour trouble. R. M., who looked pale and drawn, had with him his small daughter. After the business was finished he said he must go home to arrange for the funeral, but did not know what to do with the child. I offered to take her to my house, which I did, returning her to his flat in Lincoln's Inn Fields in the evening.]

Masterman told me that Bonar Law came to L. G.'s room during the crisis and told him and M. that he would support the Minimum Wage Bill, because if the Government and the country objected to the miners striking, the necessary consequence was that Parliament should secure the men fair wages.

Telephoned to L. G. at Folkestone, telling him result of the miners' ballot to date. Also impressed upon him the importance of securing appointment of a suitable independent chairman. On Thursday, March 28th, the Prime Minister telephoned asking me to do what I could to get the men to return to work. I said I would. Percy Illingworth, the Whip, also wrote, making the same request. On Friday, 29th, I wrote to the P.M. urging him to see that proper persons were appointed Chairmen of the District Boards and indicating serious consequences if awards were unsatisfactory. I suggested that he should induce Lord St. Aldwyn (Hicks Beach)<sup>1</sup> to act in South Wales, as he was the best of all trade arbitrators and rarely dissatisfied either side.

<sup>1</sup> d. 1916.

## Chapter VI

*Winston denies a breach with L. G.—Three essentials for a politician—Seely and the Garter—The trials of a Party Whip—Bonar Law prepares for a stormy session—A Cabinet enquiry into Labour conditions—The Insurance Commissioners at work—L. G. talks of Asquith.*

MARCH 31ST, 1912.—Spent the afternoon with Winston, who said that stories of a breach between him and L. G. are all lies. He told me that he had never worked so hard nor been so happy. "I love my work at the Admiralty," he said. He added that he had knocked Germany "sprawling" in the matter of naval construction.

We talked of Sir Almoth Wright's letter on the suffrage question, in which he insisted on the physiological point of view. I said, "These matters (the vote) are not settled by argument."

WINSTON: Yes. There is nothing in the letter really. The truth is we already have enough ignorant voters and we don't want any more.

We talked of poetry. He spoke highly of Masfield and recited long extracts from Adam Lindsay Gordon's poems. He said, "The Widow in the Bye Street" was a fine poem, but not so good as "The Everlasting Mercy."

MARCH 1912.—Long chat with Jack Seely, Under-Secretary for War. Talked of political life. I said health was all-important. "He who thralls, endures." He agreed and said that his brother had remarked to him when he returned from South Africa, "A politician must keep three things—his health, his temper and his money." But no politician had ever been able to accomplish the task. J. S. added, "I have kept my health fairly well. I think I have kept my temper, but I don't know about my money!"

Lutyens,<sup>1</sup> the architect, told me an amusing story about

<sup>1</sup> Now Sir Edwin Lutyens, R.A..

Seely. At some public function S. noticed a vivacious lady looking for a seat. He found one for her next his own. [She turned out to be Lady Alexander—wife of Sir George Alexander, the actor.] She thanked him, and said, "I should so much like to see your garter!" He, rather nonplussed, responded, "I don't wear garters!" "Oh," said the lady, "I meant the Garter the King gave you the other day!" She had mistaken Seely for Sir Edward Grey, whom he somewhat resembles.

APRIL 12TH, 1912.—Spent some time at Downing Street with Murray, Master of Elibank. Congratulated him on his recovery and return to work. He seemed well, but flushed suddenly when interested in conversation, which looks as if his heart were bad. He told me he was 42 that day. I said, "Physical fitness is essential in politics." He replied, "Yes, I agree." I said, "You will have to give up the foolish practice of beginning politics with your breakfast and never leaving the subject for a moment until you go to bed."

MURRAY: My trial is that I have to begin my official work early and I have to deal with so many subjects. It is now only 11 o'clock and I have already given important decisions on ten or twelve subjects.

Just then in came Gulland,<sup>1</sup> one of the Junior Whips, to arrange the time-table for the House of Commons on the Home Rule Bill. He brought a message from Balcarres, the Tory Whip, as to their speakers and a proposal to suspend the 11 o'clock rule. Murray said he had seen the Prime Minister and the Speaker, who would not agree, as they thought suspension unnecessary. It was interesting to note how arrangements in the House of Commons are controlled by the big-wigs.

14TH.—Talked with Bonar Law. He said the session will be a stormy one. "We shall oppose the Home Rule Bill by every means in our power. The Lords will not pass it, and in order to force an election they may decline to pass any legislation. It all turns on Ulster. The demonstration last week was a great surprise to me. It may seem strange to you and me, but it is a religious question. These people are in serious earnest. They are prepared to die for their convictions. If Ulster, or

<sup>1</sup> Later the Rt. Hon. J. W. Gulland; d. 1920.

rather any county, had the right to remain outside the Irish Parliament, for my part my objection would be met." He is a nice straightforward man—very unassuming and earnest. I said, "I don't envy the task of whoever has to govern this country during the next five years. The social outlook is stormy." He replied, "I quite agree, we are in for troublous times."

17TH.—Called on L. G. at 11 p.m.. Found him at supper with his daughter. He told me that the Cabinet have appointed a committee to investigate the Labour question and that he has been selected as chairman. The Committee intend to interview Labour leaders and employers. He does not know who is now the recognised leader of the sailors and believes that Havelock Wilson<sup>1</sup> is dying. He wants to find some man thoroughly in touch with the Labour Movement, and does not believe that Ramsay MacDonald possesses the necessary information. He asked if I knew anyone. I promised to make enquiries. I remarked that continued Labour troubles might seriously prejudice our international trade. He agreed, but thought that in future Labour would co-operate on international lines to secure international increases in wages. I said I thought this far ahead, as conditions varied so much in different countries. He said that W. T. Stead, the journalist, who had gone down in the *Titanic*, was in his later days mad on spiritualism. Stead told him he had interviewed Gladstone's ghost on the L. G. Budget. L. G. telephoned to Donald (*Daily Chronicle*) not to take the interview, but D. foolishly neglected the warning and published it.

I said, "Milner, who worked with Stead on the *Pall Mall Gazette*, remarked that he was fifty per cent. idealist and fifty showman." I added, "But he was very courageous."

L. G.: I agree. He was bold as a lion. No doubt he died like a brave man. I can imagine him helping the women and children into the boats.

R.: You could not say a finer thing about the poor old boy.

L. G.: I am certain he would act like that. I am going to Portsmouth on Saturday to spend the week-end with Winston.

R.: How is he?

<sup>1</sup> d. 1929.



L. G. (laughing): His only thought is to sink the German Navy at the earliest possible moment!

Referring to an article in the *British Weekly* in which Nicoll comments on the present position of the Insurance Bill, L. G. said some days ago, "One thing people do not understand about me is that I am a patient man. I can wait. I am very patient. I can bide my time."

19TH.—Kennedy Jones,<sup>1</sup> the *Daily Mail* man, known in Fleet Street as "K. J.", has had a severe operation and is still very ill. It is said he has cancer. He is 46. When he spent the day with L. G. in North Wales some months ago, he said, "I am going to give up newspaper work. I am going in for politics. I am going to reorganise the Conservative Party. I shall go into the House of Commons." "Have you had any practice in speaking?" asked L. G.. K. J. had to admit that the reply was in the negative, but thought he could speedily acquire the art sufficiently for House of Commons purposes.

L. G.: Parliamentary speaking is more difficult than you think. Until you attempt it, you cannot appreciate how difficult it is.

Arthur Pearson<sup>2</sup> has become practically blind. He too is only 46! George Newnes died in 1910 at 58!

27TH.—Masterman said to-day, "The alliance between L. G. and Winston has broken up. They are still as friendly as ever, but are not concerting joint plans of action as formerly." He added, "L. G. and Edward Grey have now joined hands. That is the new alliance. It dates from the coal strike. They are in sympathy regarding the Labour question and foreign policy." From my own observation I think this correct. I told Masterman that Winston was keen to improve the position of "his boys" in the Navy by increasing their pay.

Masterman is chairman of the Insurance Commissioners. I asked him how he was getting on. He said, "It is a stupendous task. The Act is a mere skeleton. All the work has to be done. I doubt if the scheme will ever be popular. I think the people will come to tolerate it, but they will never bless the Liberal Party for it as L. G. thought they would. L. G. is

<sup>1</sup> M.P. for Hornsey, 1916-21; d. 1921.

<sup>2</sup> Later Sir Arthur Pearson, newspaper proprietor; d. 1921.



[Photo: Lafayette.]

THE LATE MR. C. F. G. MASTERMAN (1913).



a great natural force. He raised the Welsh Disestablishment debate out of the mud by the fine fighting speech he delivered two or three days ago. There was an organised attempt by the Tories to barrack the chief Liberal speakers. L. G. is the only one who can really tackle that sort of opposition. But he never reads any official papers." [I wonder! He seems to get the information he wants either by reading papers or picking the brains of people who have read them.] M. spoke highly of Bonar Law's Home Rule speech. He said it was a fine fighting speech. McKenna's speech on the Welsh Disestablishment Bill he thought a poor effort.

Masterman said Rufus Isaacs is learning to appreciate the needs of the working classes. Isaacs told him that until recently he had never given the subject much thought. He had always been too busy with professional and official work. I asked M. how he got on with Mrs. Creighton, widow of the Bishop, and now one of the Insurance Commissioners. He said she was very able. She seldom spoke, but when she made a suggestion it was always a good one. I asked if she was pleasant in manner. He said, "No. Very icy."

R.: She understands the working classes and sympathises with them. Do you remember the dressing-down she gave to some pundits who had been reproaching women for gossiping at the doors of their cottages? She said, "Gossiping is a valuable safety valve. How would these critics like to be shut up in a small cottage all day long with no one to speak to?"

M.: Yes, I think her heart is in the right place, but she is very frigid, nevertheless.

[L. G. told me he was late when he first met her. He apologised. She said, "I have always understood that punctuality is one of the first principles of business," or words to that effect. Very chilling and severe. L. G. said he was nonplussed and had no answer ready.]

28TH.—I congratulated L. G. on his Welsh Disestablishment speech.

R.: You did better than you thought you would.

L. G.: Yes, it was a success, and I was rather glad, as they had been saying I was losing ground.

R.: The sentences were short and crisp.

L. G.: That is one of the chief things to aim at in public speaking.

MASTERMAN: How long did it take you to prepare the speech?

L. G.: Two hours. I dictated it. I mean the chief points.

R.: It took him twenty-five years to prepare it.

L. G. (laughing): Yes, that is quite correct. It was really the result of twenty-five years' work.

M.: It is a pity we did not give the Welsh Church our Archbishop and make them a self-contained national Church. It might have proved a great factor in social reform.

L. G.: I agree.

We talked of Rufus Isaacs, of whom L. G. and Masterman spoke in glowing terms. Then the conversation turned on Sam Evans, now President of the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Division.<sup>1</sup> I said, "Sam made a mistake. He should have held on. He might have become Lord Chancellor. He had no faith in the Government going on."

L. G. said, "Yes, quite correct. He came to me on the Bench [in the H. of C.] and asked me whether I thought he should take the Presidency. I said, 'I cannot very well advise you. If you think the Government will be able to retain office, obviously it would suit you best not to take the post. Otherwise it might be well to accept it.' He was afraid and he took it. He has regretted taking it ever since."

L. G. spoke in angry terms about a question by a Tory M.P. as to a Labour man's assertion that M.P.'s appear in the House the worse for drink. L. G. said the Speaker was very angry, as he thought the question calculated to lower the dignity of the House.

L. G. and Masterman to dinner. Talked of Asquith. L. G. said he was a most loyal colleague. M. said he sometimes wondered how Mr. A. had become leader of the Liberal Party.

L. G.: He is like a great counsel in whom solicitors and clients have faith. The party feel that when a matter is in his hands, he will see it through satisfactorily. He has splendid judgment, and, as a rule, deals with great and small subjects, in council and in the House of Commons, in an imperturbable

<sup>1</sup> d. 1918.

*April 1912]*

MORE PAGES FROM MY DIARY

manner. It remains to be seen, however, how he will conduct himself if he has to fight a failing cause. Arthur Balfour made a marvellous fight. Single-handed he carried on the battle in the country and in the House. Physically broken, he displayed undaunted courage. Always on the spot, and sometimes so dexterous in his controversy that one almost thought he was going to win. The question is whether Asquith has the same first-class courage. That has yet to be proved.

## Chapter VII

*A chat with Bonar Law—"I want the public to understand me"  
—The Liberal war-chest—A story of King Edward—The dock  
strike—L. G. outlines a land scheme, and talks of taking it to  
the country.*

MAY 3RD, 1912.—F. E. Smith offered to bet me £100 that the Home Rule Bill in its present form never becomes law. I refused.

Went to the Press Gallery Annual Dinner. Edward Grey guest of the evening. Very good music. The first occasion in the history of the House of Commons on which an Italian opera singer (a lady) had sung in the sacred precincts. She stood just below John Bright's picture. He seemed to be looking down with wonder on the scene. Speeches very good. I walked home with Grey—a charming person, simple and unaffected. Curious to feel that one was walking from the House of Commons with a man whose ancestor was a member in the reign of Charles I..

We talked of L.G.. I said, "He is a wonderful little man."

GREY: Yes, he is. He has great personal charm as well as great ability.

We spoke of the Labour question. He said, "One cannot help feeling that the men employed in a big business have as great an interest in it as the proprietors, or shareholders, as the case may be."

5TH.—Chatted with Bonar Law.

R. (laughing): Your chief defect as a party leader, if you have any defect, is that you are too anxious to get business settled!

B. L. (also laughing): I fear I speak my mind too plainly, but I shall continue to do so.

R.: The House of Commons view is not always the public

view. You get your air through cotton-wool,<sup>1</sup> and it seems to create a special mental atmosphere.

B. L.: Yes. I have fully made up my mind. I don't care what my opponents in the House of Commons think of me. My chief object is to stand well with the public. I want them to understand me.

R.: They understand plain speaking and straightforward action. They don't appreciate clever fencing.

B. L.: I am of the same opinion.

We talked of Ulster. I said I thought the Government might make some special arrangements.

He said, "I doubt if they can. I doubt whether their pledge to the Nationalist Party will permit of it."

11TH.—Played golf with Bonar Law, Masterman and Caird.<sup>2</sup>

B. L. says that during the Budget Debate someone asked Asquith whether he was bored.

He replied, "I can stand everything but Pretymen<sup>3</sup> [a violent opponent of the land taxes] when he infuses tears into his voice."

B. L. said the party leaders are annoyed because he will not go to country-house parties, but he does not mean to do so, as he does not care for that form of entertainment. He added, "I have one strong point as leader. They sought me. I did not seek the office."

He is obviously a man of simple, homely habits—not at all like the traditional leaders of the Conservative Party. He is shrewd and pawky, but very kindly. He has no "side." Asquith is much more in sympathy with the upper classes. He enjoys the grand life. He likes to live among wealthy, fashionable people. B. L. has none of these tastes. He loves his pipe, and delights in strong tea. He is a teetotaller.

He said that one of Arthur Balfour's pet aversions was a politician, now dead, whose visage resembled that of a horse. Someone remarked on this to Balfour, who replied, "He may look like a horse, but he is really an ass!"

<sup>1</sup> Air is pumped into the House of Commons through a filter of cotton-wool.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Andrew Caird.

<sup>3</sup> Later the Rt. Hon. E. G. Pretymen, M.P. for Chelmsford, 1908-23.



B. L. said that, greatly to his surprise, Rosebery proved to be the best and most witty conversationalist he had ever met.

Masterman told me he introduced Lady Frederick Cavendish, whose husband was murdered in Phoenix Park, to John Redmond in the House of Commons. She greeted him in the most pleasant manner, and congratulated him upon the Home Rule Bill, which she said would terminate a long and painful controversy.

M. said that when Gladstone went to see Lady Frederick immediately after her husband's assassination, she remarked, "You did quite right to send him to Ireland. I shall never blame you."

The Whip is said to be furnishing the war chest. Rumour has it that when the Liberals came in they had no money—not even enough, as one of them is said to have remarked, to "tar the old ship."

In view of these rumours, this curious observation, made to me by a leading Conservative, is of special interest. He said, "The Liberals have been adopting a singular practice lately. They have been taking money for honours from our people. In other words, they have been poaching on our preserves. I know of several instances."

I said, "I suppose you refer to the Coronation Honours. Has not the practice always been to grant honours to the opposition at such times?"

He said, "Yes. But not to take money for the party funds. I know that in several instances this has been done."

A leading Liberal told me that his people owed much to one of Murray's predecessors, who found the coffers empty and got in £500,000. That enabled the party to fight two elections and have a balance in hand.

16TH.—Talked with Winston, T. P. O'Connor<sup>1</sup> and Buckmaster, K.C.,<sup>2</sup> about happiness. T. P. said, "Apart from grinding poverty, happiness does not depend on environment and it is fairly equally distributed amongst all classes."

<sup>1</sup> d. 1929.

<sup>2</sup> M.P. for Keighley, 1911-14; Solicitor-General, 1913; now the Rt. Hon. Lord Buckmaster.

WINSTON: I don't agree with you. When I was at school I was miserable. I was dragooned for seven years. I was made to do work I did not like. Since then I have always done work which is a pleasure to me and I have been happy. Happiness does depend in a great measure upon environment.

Buckmaster agreed with Winston.

Talked with the Marquess de Soveral about King Edward. The Marquess said he was a remarkable man. He usually did and said the right thing by instinct. He was always dignified and never unbent except in a dignified way. The Marquess told me a quaint thing regarding the King's habit of never placing himself on the same level with friends and acquaintances. The Marquess said, "I always spent Christmas at Sandringham, but although I was continually meeting the King, he never mentioned the subject beforehand, and I never received an invitation until about five days before the date. He would never allow even me, friendly as he was with me, to imagine I was going to visit him as a matter of course."

Drove Winston to the House of Commons. J. L. Garvin, Editor of the *Observer*, came with us.

Speaking of the Navy, Garvin said to Winston, "I cannot support you, but I can always call for something *more* than you are doing, so that I shall in effect support you."

Winston asked me about the working of the Shops Act. I said it was popular and beneficial, although no doubt it required amendment. He seemed pleased, and said, "I am delighted and proud of my share in this piece of social legislation. It was a troublesome job."

I asked Garvin how long it took him to write his weekly four-column articles in the *Observer*. He said, "Seven hours' thought and six hours' writing. I write, I don't dictate, articles."

Robertson Nicoll adopts similar methods. He says, "If a journalist's exports exceed his imports, he will soon be a literary bankrupt." His weekly exports are enormous. He writes a vast number of columns, but in pursuance of his principles, devotes two days a week to reading. Like Garvin, he makes a point of meeting informative people.

17TH.—Long talk with Rowland Bailey,<sup>1</sup> head of the Stationery Office, and formerly Schomberg MacDonald's assistant at the Office of Works. He said that after Queen Victoria's death he went to Osborne to clear things up. Beside the Queen's bed he found Prince Albert's photograph, surrounded by verses of scripture. He also related a curious experience with Mr. Gladstone. Mr. G. sent to the Office of Works for an expert on locks. Bailey went to Downing Street himself. Mr. G. said, "The lock on my desk is very peculiar. Sometimes it will lock and sometimes it won't. Can you explain this peculiarity?" Bailey looked at the lock and replied, "It is broken. You had better have a new one." Gladstone said, "That had not occurred to me. Perhaps you are right."

Bailey told me that Sir Frederick Treves,<sup>2</sup> the surgeon who operated on King Edward, is seriously ill (angina pectoris). They are great friends. He said that Treves's first operation to remove an appendix was performed on a man who was very ill and gradually getting worse. Treves said to him, "This operation has not been performed before. It may kill you, but you will die unless it is done. Would you care to try the experiment?" The man said he would, and the operation was successful. I don't know whether Bailey is correct about the novelty of the operation, but the story is interesting.

19TH.—Donald of the *Daily Chronicle* says that Murray, the Whip, has invented a new form of flattery. He tells journalists that the Prime Minister has read their articles with great interest and satisfaction, and M.P.'s that the P.M. was ravished by their speeches.

23RD.—Sir Charles Mathews, the Public Prosecutor, told me that Mrs. Pankhurst<sup>3</sup> made a wonderful speech at her trial—one of the best he has heard. He seemed much surprised at her ability. Like most people, he had not thought that any woman could make such an able speech in a law court.

<sup>1</sup> Later Sir Rowland Bailey; d. 1930.

<sup>2</sup> d. 1923.

<sup>3</sup> The Women's Suffrage leader; d. 1928.

27TH.—Dock strike in full blast.<sup>1</sup> 152,000 men out. Called at Downing Street and found L. G. just returned from Swansea. He pressed me to stay to dinner and sent to enquire "what there was to eat." In due course a shoulder of lamb arrived. He apologised for the meagreness of the fare, saying, "I am a simple liver." I responded, "So am I." He was anxious to begin, and sent the maid for Mrs. L. G. and the other members of the family. He then set to work to carve. He made a poor job of it, and laughingly excused himself by saying that he never had been able to carve. No sooner had we started on our meal, than in came a message from the Liberal candidate in the Norfolk by-election, saying that he had received no message from L. G., who then left the table and dictated a note to his secretary. Then the messenger announced that McKenna, the Home Secretary, had arrived. L. G. again left the table, and interviewed the H.S. in the garden. When he returned, he told us that the masters had declined to meet the men and he feared there would be a big fight. He said, "The masters are very bitter." He added, "When people decline to accept terms proposed, the best plan is to offer them an unexpected alternative which places them in an awkward position." From this I gather he has some fresh plan to put forward.

*Important.*—L. G. said, "I am convinced that the land question is the real issue. You must break down the remnants of the feudal system. I have a scheme. I propose that a land court should be established to fix fair rents and tenures."

R.: Will the farmer give his men more wages because he pays less rent?

L. G.: I have thought of that. I shall allow the farm labourer to be represented at the enquiry to fix the rent, and I shall prescribe that the rent shall be fixed, not on the basis of wages paid, but on the basis of wages which should be paid, having regard to cost of living, etc.. You need not be

<sup>1</sup> The Port of London transport workers declared a general strike on May 23rd in support of the lightermen, who were involved in a dispute concerning the employment of non-union labour, alleged victimisation, breach of agreements by the employers, and other matters. A national strike was declared on June 10th, but it failed, as also did an attempt to bring out the railwaymen in sympathy.

surprised if you hear one day that I have retired from the Cabinet to devote myself to carrying on this land movement.

R.: That would be a drastic step.

L. G.: It would. But if my colleagues object to my speeches, I should either have to retire or abandon my propaganda. When you are in a fight of that sort, you must hit hard. That might annoy my friends, although I am bound to say that Asquith has always been very good. He has never criticised my speeches except in a humorous way. He has sometimes said in a laughing manner, "That was a naughty speech!" I should do in effect what Joe [Chamberlain] did, but I should avoid personal animosities with my colleagues, with all of whom I am on the best of terms. [L. G. frequently refers to Chamberlain's career and compares it with his own.] You must make a hot fight. They always talk of Cobden's reasoned speeches. I have been looking at them. He often said very hot things, and then there was Bright fighting the battle as well.

R.: Is it necessary to take such a drastic step as resignation? There are causes which warrant great personal sacrifices. Is this one of them?

L. G.: Well, one would not go to the stake for land reform, but there are times when Radicalism needs a great stimulus—when the Radical cause has fallen into the abyss of respectability and conventionality. Something must be done to put fresh life into the dry bones. I feel that the land and the agricultural labourer are at the root of the whole social evil. Men purchase land for collateral purposes. They give it an adventitious value. You must make the rent of agricultural land approximate to its real value.

R.: There are difficulties in the way of fixing a value that is not the market value.

L. G.: The land will produce so much. Then you must charge against that revenue: (1) wages on a fair scale, (2) rates and taxes, (3) cost of materials, etc., (4) farmer's profit. The balance should be the rent. I am thinking it all out.

R.: Leasehold enfranchisement would be popular, and fair rents and fixity of tenure would be a blessing to the agricultural community in view of the extensive sales of large estates, but

the wages question demands a more direct method, perhaps provisional only, while society is groping its way towards a solution. Some remedy is wanted which will at any rate diminish the present unrest in the Labour world.

L. G. listened moodily. He is the only leading man who has the courage to attack the rich and powerful. All other leading politicians deal with the stock political commodities, such as Home Rule, Disestablishment, etc.. They do not deal with the real vital issues—privilege and the division of the profits of industry. L. G. says what the mass of the people feel but cannot express. When he comes to definite proposals his defect is that he usually wants to invent some new scheme full of intricacies and indirect in its action. He made a curious remark. He said, "I knew the land taxes would not produce much. I only put them in the Budget because I could not get a valuation without them."

We talked of Winston.

L. G.: Winston is happy. He told me that whatever life has in store for him—even if he becomes Prime Minister—he thinks he could never be happier.

After this talk in came Mrs. L. G. with some papers regarding a Limerick competition at a Welsh bazaar. L. G. at once seized one of the sheets and began to compose the last lines of the verses with considerable skill and rapidity. What pleased him most was a line relating to Cardiganshire. "And see they don't water their milk," he suggested.

I went on to Robertson Nicoll and told him something of my talk with L. G.. Nicoll said, "He will have to face the minimum wage for workers in sweated trades. It may be a temporary expedient, and it may be objectionable, but it is the only real palliative in sight at the moment."

28TH.—Spoke to Masterman.

He said, "L. G. is very restless just now. He told me of his talk with you. I am restless too. If the Government don't do something for these underpaid people, I feel disposed to resign. Many of my supporters in Bethnal Green are writing most indignant letters."

I said, "Don't act hurriedly. L. G. and you can do more in the Government than out of it."

[This reminds me that I said to L. G. on Wednesday, "Let us see how your plan would work out. (1) You would resign. (2) You would carry on your propaganda. (3) At the General Election there would be the usual three parties, and a fourth—the L. G. Party. The official Liberal and Conservative Parties have the funds. The Labour Party have an organisation. What would your party have?"

He said, "I have been thinking that out. In politics every one is mad to win. Men will swallow a great deal for the joy of winning. Rich men will support all sorts of things they hate in order to defeat the other side. Now if my movement was a great success, no doubt it would be adopted by the official party and I should go back if they went back. Of course, if it was not a success, I should have to consider what I should do."]

## Chapter VIII

*The Party Whips discuss their leaders—Lord Northcliffe's business maxims—More about L. G.'s land scheme—Newspaper progress in Scotland—The Home Secretary and the Suffragettes.*

JUNE 1ST, 1912.—Talked with Bonar Law. We spoke of Arthur Pearson, who has become completely blind, and is in a bad state of health. I said I had heard that the Conservative Party had bought or were about to buy the *Express*. B. L. said this was not true. The proposal had been made, but he had vetoed it. I told him I thought he had come to a wise decision.

Johnstone, Pearson's brother-in-law, gave me a pathetic account of his visit to Pearson on the previous day. He walked into his room unannounced and found him engaged in painfully spelling a book in Braille characters for the blind. This is a great tragedy.

6TH.—Amusing talk with Master of Elibank, Percy Illingworth, a Liberal Whip, and Steel-Maitland,<sup>1</sup> one of the Conservative Whips. All three protested that honours are not sold. Elibank said, "These things are much exaggerated." I said, "That may be, but I am stating the popular idea, confirmed by conversations with leading men on both sides. Furthermore, I am told that there has been poaching." Elibank looked uncomfortable and remarked, "There are all sorts of nonsensical stories."

Subsequently I talked alone with Elibank. He said, "We are in for a new political situation. When Home Rule and Welsh Disestablishment have been disposed of, we shall have to face a great economic problem. The Labour question is the question of the future. How things will shape I cannot say." Then he went on to laud the old-fashioned traditional Liberal Party. He said, "Look at this Government. It comprises all that is best in Conservatism and Radicalism. No one could call Haldane a Radical, and Winston represents a great section of

<sup>1</sup> Now the Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland.



the British people. On the other hand, you have Lloyd George and Grey. This is the best sort of Government. We don't want to come up too close to the red tie."

He spoke of his work as Whip. He said, "It is a difficult task, but full of interest. I love the House of Commons. I love the game." I said, "You are like your ancestors. You enjoy politics as they enjoyed roystering and duelling." He laughed and said, "Perhaps you are right. It is in the blood."

Steel-Maitland compared Bonar Law with Balfour. I said, "Bonar is doing well in the country." He agreed, but did not seem enthusiastic. The House of Commons's preference for Balfour evidently weighs with the Conservative leaders. They admire A. J. B.'s powers, and regard Bonar Law as ordinary in comparison. They do not appreciate his business-like qualities and shrewdness. I said that one of A. J. B.'s strong points is the gift of raising pregnant questions. For instance, the effect of modern science on industrial production, the necessity for more cheerful literature, and the necessity in politics and statesmanship for weaving the new with the old. Utterances like these make men think and affect their actions. Elibank and Maitland agreed. Elibank told us that Campbell-Bannerman<sup>1</sup> was fond of Walter Long, and once told him (Elibank) that one day Long would lead the Conservative Party. Elibank added that there was a similarity between the two men.

I asked L. G. to go to Brighton with me next week to see Robertson Nicoll. He said he would, as he wanted to have a chat with him.

8TH AND 10TH.—Spent several hours with Northcliffe, who seems much better. He said he was still very ill, but that his health has improved recently. He ascribes this in a great measure to golf, and complimented me on having popularised the game in Fleet Street! He told me he cannot sleep at Sutton Place, his house near Guildford. He spends the night in a bungalow he has built on a hill three and a half miles away. Evidently he is much concerned about his health.

When discussing business, he remarked with much emphasis, "Never have more than one member of the same

<sup>1</sup> The Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Prime Minister, 1905-8; d. 1908.

family in your service. Never make an experiment on an experiment—that is, when making an experiment try to use well-tried methods.”

15TH.—Spent the day with Masterman. Referring to the appointment of Haldane as Lord Chancellor in place of Loreburn,<sup>1</sup> who resigned on Monday week, he said that Rufus Isaacs, as Attorney-General, is to be made a member of the Cabinet.

I said, “L. G. and Winston do not seem to be as intimate as they were.”

MASTERMAN: Personally they are as close friends as ever, but they are drifting apart on principles.

R.: L. G. is evidently growing out of sympathy with the other members of the Cabinet.

MASTERMAN: Quite correct. He is very restless. He said to me the other day when he came from a Cabinet meeting at which he had been trying to do something for the poor dockers, “I don’t know exactly what I am, but I am sure I am not a Liberal. They have no sympathy with the people.”

R.: L. G. is beginning to understand town dwellers better than he did.

MASTERMAN: Yes. That used to be the difficulty. L. G. is a country lad. All his early experiences were in an agricultural community.

R.: To carry out his present-day policy he will have to come to the minimum wage or some other form of State interference—a sort of mild Socialism, although he would not admit it. I suppose the world is moving that way.

MASTERMAN: Yes, and the sooner he adopts it the better.

We talked of Bonar Law. I said, “He has his troubles. I hear that some of his people are annoyed that he will not take more part in social life.”

MASTERMAN: Yes, the aristocrats and plutocrats, who consider they are the Conservative Party, want to have their leader on show at their week-end parties. They resent the fact that he will not go. Arthur Balfour used to make a practice of paying week-end visits. Hostesses like to entertain a man who has, or soon may have, all sorts of patronage to confer.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Chancellor, 1905-12; d. 1923.

19TH.—L. G., Masterman and Robertson Nicoll came to dinner.

L. G.: They may say what they like about us, but we are certainly the most hard-working ministry known to history. We work like galley-slaves—morning, noon and night. I never have a minute to myself nowadays.

We talked of Swinburne.

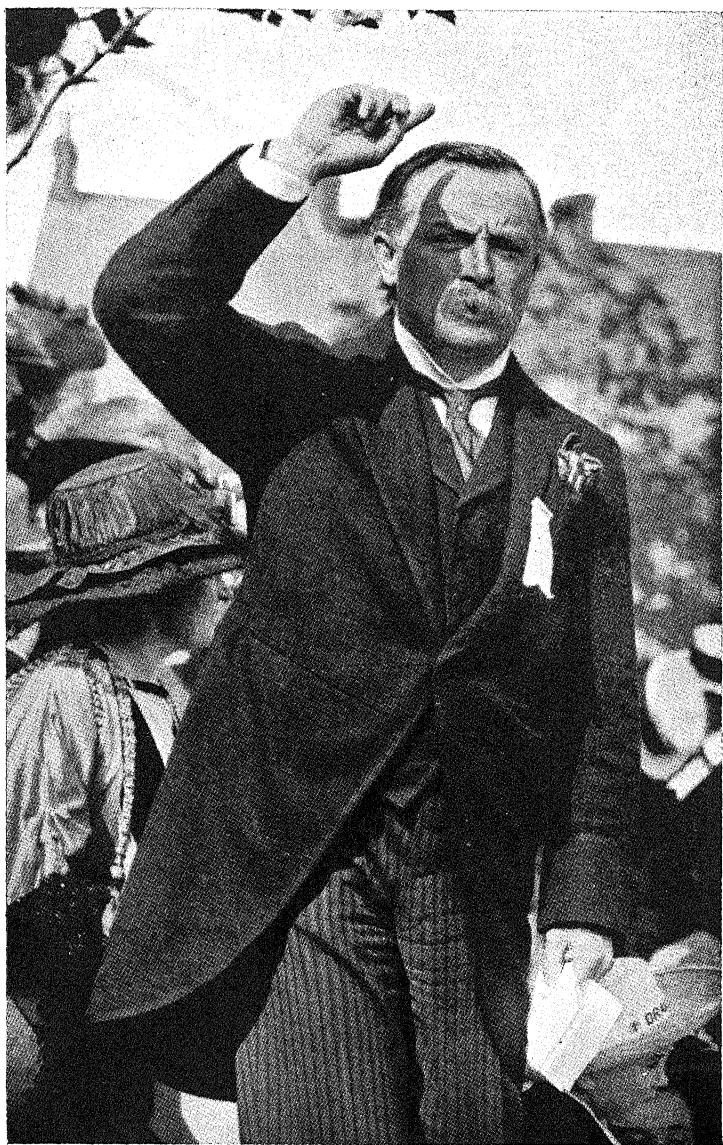
NICOLL: He never wrote well after Watts Dunton rescued him from the brandy bottle.

L. G.: Perhaps it is a pity that he did. Swinburne might have had a few more glorious years and the world some more glorious verses. As it was, the latter part of his life was a poor affair.

We discussed the political situation. L. G., turning to me, said, "I have told the Prime Minister about my plans. He has given his consent. As I have told you before, the old boy has always treated me extremely well." L. G. then stated his new land policy as already detailed in these notes:

(1) Breaking down the "relics of feudalism." (2) Creation of land courts to fix fair rents and tenure for agricultural land. (3) Creation of courts to fix fair terms for leaseholders who desire to improve the demised premises. (4) Creation of tribunals to fix agricultural wages in the various districts. (This is new and obviously involves a minimum wage for agricultural workers.) (5) Establishment of a rule that in fixing agricultural rents regard must be had not to wages paid but to wages which should be paid and which are to be ascertained under (4).

He said, "First of all we shall make an investigation to ascertain the facts accurately. We propose to start the campaign in September." I said, "Take the case of a mixed farm of 500 acres, rent £500, by how much would a reduction of £100 in rent improve the position of labourers working on the farm?" L. G. then took an envelope out of his pocket, and after some discussion as to the number of men who would be employed on such a farm, calculated that £100 reduction would enable each man to receive an extra 2s. per week in wages. As he was figuring away on his envelope, I was thinking of the great issues depending upon these and similar calculations.



MR. LLOYD GEORGE MAKING A SPEECH (1912).



L. G. is shrewd and crafty, combining the astuteness of an attorney with a statesman's imagination, courage and foresight. This land scheme is a shrewd political move. While it deals with present-day economic troubles, it is framed to appeal to the Liberal politician who is not prepared to attack the commercial classes, but will rejoice in attacking the pockets and privileges of his traditional bugbears and enemies, the squires and ground landlords.

23RD.—Spent the day with Mr. Law, one of the proprietors of the *Scotsman*. He said that the rise of the *Scotsman* was due in the first instance to the arrangements which he made for its distribution. He initiated the plan of sending special parcels to the newsagents throughout the country, carriage paid. When he started with the *Scotsman* fifty-five years ago, it was a small four-page sheet, with a circulation confined to Edinburgh and the immediate district. Immediately he began his new arrangements, the circulation rose rapidly. I told him that I had the same experience with the *News of the World*. When I started in the Sunday newspaper business, Sunday papers were sold almost exclusively by newsagents who opened on Sunday. As these were few in number, the Sunday newspaper sales were limited accordingly. I adopted the device of appointing thousands of direct agents throughout the country who might or might not be connected with the newspaper trade during the week. This had the double effect of opening up new channels of sale and stimulating the newsagents. I also started special railway and carrier services. The huge circulations of the Sunday newspapers have thus been made possible. [I have just started selling the *News of the World* in Scotland, thus being the first newspaper proprietor to sell a Sunday newspaper in that country.]

Mr. Law said the *Scotsman* was the first paper to report golf. For some time the leading Scottish clubs raised difficulties, but gradually came into line.

He also told me that the sudden change of the *Birmingham Post* from Free Trade to Tariff Reform, which caused much comment at the time, took place under the following circumstances. The late Mr. Feeney, the proprietor, was ill for some months before his death and unable to give directions regarding

his business. Law, an old friend of his, went to Birmingham to see Mrs. Feeney, who wished to consult him about the paper's policy. As a result of the conference, the editor was told that he must either support Chamberlain or resign. Law said that the change was not due to any pressure or request by Chamberlain, but was made solely because Law thought it in the interests of the paper.

A House of Lords official told me a tragic story about an unhappy peer who was attacked by a terrible disease which caused him to mortify. His appearance ultimately became so horrible that he had to be asked to refrain from attending the House of Lords.

Another prominent person told me a quaint story about a lunatic peer who thought he was Charles II.. Under this delusion he fired round after round with his revolver to summon the fleet.

I responded by telling him about a Scottish gentleman who suddenly went mad and killed his wife. He was taken to an asylum and recovered. A house was built for him in a beautiful spot overlooking the Tweed. When he took possession the doctor gave instructions that all reminiscences of his late wife should be carefully excluded from the house. All went well for a month, when one day the wretched man found in a book a letter from his wife. He at once went mad again, and, while being taken back to the asylum, struggled so violently that he died from his injuries. This story was told to me by a friend of mine who bought the house.

27TH.—Talked with F. E. Smith regarding historic retorts. F. E. said the best retort of modern times was that made by Chamberlain during the Home Rule Debate. The Duke of Devonshire was mentioned. Dillon called out, "Precious seldom he goes to Ireland!" "Yes," said Joe, "since you killed his brother!"

28TH.—Saw L. G. at the request of certain employers concerned in the dock strike, and put before him proposals for a settlement. He saw the Prime Minister, and it was arranged that Wedgwood Benn, one of the Junior Whips, should see Gosling, the men's leader. But I am doubtful if anything will come of it. L. G. said Gosling was a nice man

with fine manners, and had created a most favourable impression at the conferences.

I asked why Mrs. Pankhurst had been released. L. G. said, "They could not make her retain any food. She was dying, so they had to release her." He told me he had advised the Prime Minister to attend no more receptions. [He was assailed by Suffragettes last night at Lady Glenconner's, and a fortnight ago at the Foreign Office.]

I said to L. G., "The position of Home Secretary is the most difficult in the Government. McKenna is badgered on all hands. The parish pump is what the public care most about."

L. G.: Quite true. I have always said that the post is most difficult. Look at Henry Matthews<sup>1</sup> and the Cass case. Look at Asquith and Featherstone. He knew absolutely nothing of the shooting of the two miners by the troops, but he had all the blame. Look at Winston last year, and look at McKenna to-day. He is really a capable man for this sort of job, and I consider he is performing a difficult, troublesome task in an able way. He usually does the right thing. But he has a bad manner, which prevents him from doing himself justice.

L. G. spoke of a meeting which he was to address on the following day. He said he expected the Suffragettes would prevent him from speaking. [They did, in fact, make this very difficult.] He told me that a printer had been instructed to print 1,000 tickets for the meeting, but suspecting that the tickets were being ordered for a fraudulent purpose, communicated with the conveners of the meeting and ascertained that the order was not genuine. Just then Mrs. L. G. came into the room. She said the Chancellor owed her 10s.. He at once came down from high politics and presented her with £1, which seemed to please her.

Sir Edwin Pears,<sup>2</sup> who was Consul at Constantinople for many years, tells me that Turkey is changing slowly, and not nearly so fast as the English newspapers would lead one to think. I asked him what sort of a man the Sultan<sup>3</sup> was. He said, "A very cunning man, but not really clever. He can,

<sup>1</sup> Later Viscount Llandaff, Home Secretary, 1886-92; d. 1913.

<sup>2</sup> d. 1919.

<sup>3</sup> Abdul Hamid II., 1842-1918.



however, say clever things. For example, a foreign Ambassador, who had been invited to the Sultan's beautiful little theatre, was smoking and expectorating freely. The Sultan, who was not smoking, made no comment. The Ambassador enquired whether his Majesty was a smoker. The Sultan said, 'Yes, but I only smoke in the garden where I can spit! ' "

I asked Sir Edwin whether Turkish women are intelligent. He replied, "The truest saying about them was made by an English lady—'They are children with the vices of women! ' "

## Chapter IX

*The short-sighted Labour Party—L. G. suggests a Coalition Government—Asquith's skill in the House—Liberal-Labour bitterness—Sidelights on the Parnell Commission—The rise of Sir William Robertson—Syndicalist activity.*

JULY 1ST, 1912.—Hartshorn, the miners' leader, thinks the Minimum Wage Act will cost the colliery owners £2,000,000 per annum. He likes L. G.'s new programme, but doubts whether it will appeal to the town worker who wants something for himself. He describes the life of a Labour leader as very harassing, full of disappointments and disillusion. He told me that the Syndicalists are making no headway, and that their scheme is absurd. He added, "They won't meet me in public discussion. They know I can smash them." He has the same confidence in his powers as most other leaders, political or trade union. They are always convinced they can smash the other side. Hartshorn said although the working classes are not altogether pleased with this Government, they recognise that, taking its history as a whole, it has done a great deal for them.

2ND.—L. G. told me that yesterday he sat next to Elizabeth Asquith, the Prime Minister's daughter, at lunch. She made some remark concerning McKenna, whereupon L. G. replied, "He is a nice man, but does not always do himself justice." The young lady then observed, "His faults are on the surface. You don't have to dig them up. Winston digs his faults up for you. He saves you the trouble. In your case (L. G. himself), I should think you would have to dig pretty deep to discover yours." She further observed, "McKenna is a calico man. You can measure him out by the yard—all the same. He is like the small boxes of paints we had when we were children—red, green and blue, all the same size, each in its little compartment. You knew just what you had to expect. You (L. G.), on the other hand, resemble the small tubes of paint which one has to squeeze. You never know exactly how much

or how little will appear, or whether the paint will be thick or thin, or, if you have lost the label, what the colour will be." L. G. was highly amused and diverted by these pleasantries. We talked of his new political move regarding the land, etc.. I said, "Will it appeal to the town worker? Won't he want something more direct—something that will benefit him now?" I repeated what Hartshorn had said.

L. G.: In politics you must have a horizon. A policy which deals only with immediate benefits never succeeds. When you examine the landscape which is close at hand, you see the greenfly.

R.: And the rabbit hole in which you may put your foot and break your ankle!

L. G. (laughing): Quite true! The Labour Party have never made any real progress. They have never made an appeal to the imagination. You can never run a great political campaign on wages. Your 5s. and 2s. is all very well, but the appeal is too close at hand. It is too sordid. Individually, people are selfish. In the mass, they are prepared to look to the future and support measures which will benefit coming generations.

R.: That may be true, but the immediate needs of the people are such that whether they support your policy or not, they will agitate for some present amelioration of their own needs. Are we not trending to wage arbitration with its sequels—enforced obedience in some shape by both parties—employers and employed?

L. G.: I think we are, but at the moment neither employers nor employed are ready to agree to that method. You cannot hope to carry such proposals in the existing state of public opinion, but I agree we are trending that way, and may have State interference within a comparatively short time.

I commented on the Prime Minister's action in regard to the Labour motion on the dock strike. [The P.M. said the Government would leave members to vote as they thought fit.] I remarked that this seemed a weak policy.

L. G.: I think so too. I would not be a party to it. The duty of a Government is to govern. I told Edward Grey of my land policy. He seemed favourable. I also told Winston. I also mentioned it to Runciman. As Minister of Agriculture,

he might feel he had a grievance if he had not been told. When starting a policy, it is always well to consult your colleagues beforehand, otherwise they may become opponents out of pique.

R.: As Chamberlain said in one of his speeches: "The orchestra are entitled to know what the overture is going to be." But I suppose the minor people don't really matter.

L. G.: They don't, except in this way. If you get a big man in opposition, it is very important to have the smaller fry on your side. Some time ago I thought the whole matter out. I said to Winston, "I have two alternatives to propose—the first to form a coalition, settle the old outstanding questions, including Home Rule, and govern the country on middle lines acceptable to both parties but providing measures of moderate social reform. The other, to formulate and carry through an advanced land and social reform policy." Mrs. Winston, who was there, said, "I am for the second." Winston replied, "I am for the first!" I (L. G.) shall never forget the incident. We were playing golf at Criccieth. Winston forgot all about the game and has never forgotten our conversation.

Evidently L. G. dominates the Cabinet or, at any rate, his colleagues give way to him. It is a strange phenomenon—this poor Welsh lawyer busily engaged in hatching schemes to hurl the mighty from their seats and, what is more, being able to get his schemes adopted by the Cabinet. Joe Chamberlain is obviously his model, but he is more elastic than J. C., and more dexterous in manipulating the Press and public opinion, etc..

In the morning I saw a funny little episode. When I reached Downing Street, I found a pretty girl standing at the door. The servant let me in hurriedly, and then interviewed the lady through a narrow slit of open door. Evidently the maid thought the visitor was a Suffragette. Later on a message was brought to L. G. to the effect that a woman correspondent of a Sunday paper wished to interview him on golf. He said, "I can't see her. I don't want to be interviewed on golf. I have nothing to say." Then came the message that the reporter would lose her job if she did not see him. "Very well," he said, "show her in!" And in came the lady of the doorstep, who explained that she had only recently been employed, and so on. L. G. said, "Where is your pencil?" "Oh no," replied the

girl, "I want you to write me a few lines with your own hand!" That seemed rather a staggerer. He said, "I hate writing, but I suppose I must!" He then sat down and painfully wrote a few hurried lines. He read them to me. I pointed out that in his haste he had used the same word twice. "Ah," he said, "I must do it over again!" which he did. All kind and good-tempered in a busy man—although no doubt he likes publicity. He is very astute and never misses an opportunity.

Buckmaster told me of a good legal retort. A barrister, when addressing the Court, kept on insisting that an offer of settlement had been made. "My Lord," he said, "we held out the olive branch eighteen months ago!" "Yes," retorted the Judge, "but there were no olives on it!" I mentioned the well-known retort made by Lord Justice Coleridge to Mrs. Weldon, who said, when referring to the attitude of the Court, "Even my Lord thinks I am a poor misguided woman!" "You may be a thought-reader, Mrs. Weldon, but I did not say so," retorted the Judge.

The witty Lord Justice Bowen is said to have remarked, when speaking of Mr. Justice Kekewich, whose judgments were frequently upset on appeal, "A judgment of Mr. Justice K. is like a voyage started on a Friday—dangerous, but not necessarily fatal!"

6TH.—Spent the day with L. G. and Seely, new Minister for War. We talked of Winston. Both L. G. and Seely spoke of him in high terms, but L. G. said an amusing thing.

L. G.: I saw Winston a day or two ago. The Navy has become an obsession with him. I said to him, "You have become a water creature. You think we all live in the sea, and all your thoughts are devoted to sea life, fishes and other aquatic creatures. You forget that most of us live on land."

Seely is a delightful person—very kind. L. G. and he agreed that Asquith dominates the House of Commons by intellectual superiority. They said he has the best brain in the House and that the House knows it. L. G. remarked, "The other day Gilbert Parker<sup>1</sup> made an interruption. Asquith took no notice. Then Parker made the remark again, whereupon Asquith said, 'What's that?' Then pausing for a moment he

<sup>1</sup> Sir Gilbert Parker, the novelist, M.P. for Gravesend, 1900-18; d. 1932.

continued, 'It seems to me there is nothing in the honourable gentleman's point.' There was nothing remarkable or original in Asquith's statement, but everyone in the House felt that he had finally disposed of the matter and that Parker must have been sorry he spoke."

It is evident from what L. G. said to-day that the fight between the Liberal and Labour Parties is pretty bitter. It is quite clear that the Liberals would like to wipe out the Labour Party, and that, failing this, they are most anxious to keep it "in its place." The truth is that the aims and objects of these two parties differ far more than those of the moderate Liberals and Conservatives, who are both pledged to improve the condition of the people, but shrink from drastic action directed against the commercial classes.

In discussing the Liberal-Labour dispute over two pending by-elections, L. G. said, "I would rather see the Conservative get in than the Labour man." I wonder if he will change his tune.

Talked with Seely about war. [He is noted for his courage and has done many brave deeds.] He said it is a curious sensation to go into action, when you know that the chances are only three to one in favour of your going through the day alive. He had been in many tight places, but had felt nervous only when going into action or when about to address the House of Commons on a big occasion. I said, "How do you feel?" "Well," he responded, "you feel a queer metallic taste in your mouth, as if you had been sucking the brass knob of a bedstead!" He said he was the first Cabinet Minister appointed by wireless telegraphy. Loreburn's resignation was marconied to the Prime Minister, who was abroad. Mr. A. sent a wireless message through the Admiralty appointing Seely to succeed Haldane at the War Office.

Donald told me that the Government had offered him a knighthood, which he had declined, as it might fetter the freedom of action of his paper. He had suggested that the honour should be conferred on E. T. Cook, formerly chief leader-writer for the *Chronicle*, and a distinguished journalist and literary man. A curious story.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sir Edward Cook (d. 1919) did, in fact, receive his knighthood in 1912.

7TH.—Talking of the way in which the English people carry on their institutions, Seely said that one of the best speeches on Free Trade was delivered by Lord Hamilton at the annual dinner of the Cab-drivers' Benevolent Association, and Chamberlain made one of his first pronouncements on Tariff Reform at a jewellers' dinner!

9TH.—Naval Review. Winston kindly sent me a card for the Admiralty yacht *Enchantress*. The party on board consisted of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Asquith, Winston, four Canadian Cabinet Ministers, five editors—Buckle (*The Times*), Marlowe (*Daily Mail*), Donald (*Chronicle*), Gardiner (*Daily News*), Blumenfeld (*Daily Express*)—General French<sup>1</sup> and Sir Edward Carson. The P.M. stood on the bridge nearly all day taking great interest in the proceedings—his hair, very long, floating in the breeze. I said to Mrs. Asquith, "Downing Street seems to be a good hair-producing district—the Prime Minister and Lloyd George look rather like bards!" "Yes," she said, "but long hair suits him (the P.M.). I have tried him both ways, and he certainly looks better with long hair." She took the matter quite seriously. I said, "He is growing to look rather like Gladstone." She agreed that he did when you looked down at him in the House of Commons.

Buckle<sup>2</sup> of *The Times* is a fine type of man—simple, high-minded, tolerant, courteous and unassuming. He evidently means to retire at an early date. He said, "I have been editor of *The Times* for twenty-eight years—a longer period than any preceding editor except Delane, who held the post for thirty-six years. I am entitled to a little rest." We talked of the Parnell Commission.<sup>3</sup> He said, "It was a terrible business. It cost £200,000. John Walter<sup>4</sup> always thought the Government would pay the cost of the evidence, but *The Times* was left to pay the whole thing." I enquired whether he was present

<sup>1</sup> Later Earl of Ypres; d. 1925.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. George Earle Buckle, Editor of *The Times*, February 1884 to August 1912.

<sup>3</sup> Appointed in 1888 to investigate charges that Parnell and others had conspired at crime and outrage in the days of the Land League Parnell was vindicated.

<sup>4</sup> 1818-94; chief proprietor of *The Times*.

when Pigott<sup>1</sup> was cross-examined. He said, "No. I am glad I was not. We did not know until shortly before the trial from what source the letters had actually come. They were brought to us by J. C. Houston,<sup>2</sup> who was vouched for by three well-known men of undoubted integrity and position. Two of them are dead now, so I can give you their names—one was Richard Grosvenor (Lord Stalbridge<sup>3</sup>) and the other Blennerhassett.<sup>4</sup> The third still lives, so I will not mention who he was. Houston would not say where the letters came from."

Talked with Winston, who looked very happy. He wrote a letter to his wife, who was ill in London, and gave it to me to take to her, which I did. Winston discussed oil fuel for the Fleet. He said it would effect an enormous saving in space and labour. I said, "What would come of the poor South Wales colliers?"

WINSTON: There would be plenty of other markets for their coal.

12TH.—Very hot. Went to Walton Heath. Found the Bishop of London in one of the dressing-rooms rubbing himself vigorously with a towel. I discreetly retired. He called me back, and said, "You have seen our letter regarding the dock strike?" I said, "Yes, a splendid letter." He said, "I drafted a much stronger one, but my colleagues would not sign it. Can I do anything more? If you think I can, let me know. I feel very strongly about the matter." I said, "Robertson Nicoll, of the *British Weekly*, was much impressed by your letter, which he describes as a credit to the Church of England." The Bishop seemed pleased. He is kind-hearted, and sincerely in sympathy with the starving strikers. He has sent them £100.

14TH.—Yesterday L. G. made a speech on the inauguration of his National Insurance Scheme. Before the speech he was attacked by a male suffragist, who tried to strike him on the head. The assailant was captured by a detective, but in the struggle L. G. was pulled to the ground. I called at Downing

<sup>1</sup> Richard Pigott, who later confessed that he had forged letters incriminating Parnell, and committed suicide before the commission presented its report.

<sup>2</sup> A young journalist who had been appointed Secretary of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, a Unionist organisation.

<sup>3</sup> d. May 1912.

<sup>4</sup> The Rt. Hon. Sir Rowland Blennerhassett, an Irish Privy Councillor and M.P.; d. 1909.



Street and saw Mrs. L. G.. She said her husband was none the worse, but very tired. L. G. told his wife that the attack stimulated him and that he did not feel nervous. He tried to hit the man, but was prevented. Mrs. L. G. said, "It is well he did not. He is very muscular and, when angry, very fierce!"

Talked with Bonar Law. He said, "The Hanley election [declared last night] is a great triumph for the Liberals." [The contest was three-cornered—Conservative, Liberal and Labour. The Liberal, to the general surprise, got in.] I said, "Luckily for them, the Labour candidate was very weak."

B. L.: So poor that I believe it was a put-up job.

I said, "I doubt that." We spoke of L. G.. B. L. said that a prominent member of the Liberal Party in close touch with the Government had asked him whether he was friendly with the little man. B. L. had replied, "I like him personally, but, as I am attacking him, think it wiser and more proper to avoid him." The prominent member had replied, "Well, even *we* find him a little trying sometimes." He spoke of Winston, and asked me whether I thought the alliance between him and L. G. was at an end. I said, with caution, "They are still personal friends, but Winston's whole attention is now directed to the Navy."

B. L.: I sometimes wonder why he shows Arthur Balfour so much attention nowadays. He seems anxious to heal the breach between them. Balfour tells me all about it. I wonder whether Winston believes that a coalition may come, as I believe it may, and that he will get what he wants through lying dormant for the time being.

I replied, "God only knows—the ways of politicians are inscrutable." He laughed and said, "Of some politicians." I said, "It is all very interesting." He said, "Most interesting—a peculiar situation. Men's minds are in a strange state of flux. Only the other day a great Conservative commercial magnate saw me by appointment. He told me that Tariff Reform was a good policy, but must be accompanied by a statutory provision that all wages should be raised 10 per cent.. This is an extraordinary proposal for the policy of the Conservative party. Such a suggestion makes one wonder if one is living in dreamland."

Mrs. L. G. told me that L. G. had been much worried by a speech of the Governor of the Bank of England at the Bankers' dinner, to which he had had no opportunity of replying, and that he had been unable to sleep in consequence—a rare occurrence with him.

16TH.—Long chat with Sir Edward Troup, head of the Home Office. He says he became quite fond of Winston. He speaks well of McKenna. I asked him about McKenna's much criticised speech at the beginning of the strike. Sir Edward said it was quite excusable. The Whips neglected to tell McKenna that he would be called upon. He had gone home, and was getting into bed at 11.5, when he was sent for, and was on his feet in the House of Commons at 11.18. We discussed the Employment of Children Bill, and agreed upon an amendment which we thought would meet the views of both promoters and critics. Sir Edward is a first-class civil servant with a statesmanlike outlook. He is a calm sort of man, never perturbed by riots, strikes and the like. A gruesome little list is exhibited in the rooms of the chief officials at the Home Office. It contains particulars of forthcoming executions. The list is exhibited in this way to ensure that the possibility of reprieves may not be overlooked.

17TH.—Nicoll related a conversation he had recently with Lord Shaw, the Scottish Lord of Appeal.<sup>1</sup> N. said, "How do you like your new position?" Shaw replied, "Very much. But it is solemn work. The last word!" [By which he meant that the decision of the House of Lords on a legal point is final.<sup>2</sup>]

<sup>1</sup> Now Lord Craigmyle.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Shaw's famous *Letters to Isabel* (his daughter) contains a witty passage concerning his appointment in 1909 as a Lord of Appeal. He says:

On many platforms I had spoken freely and I hope faithfully and without undue compliment of the Gilded Chamber, and then Dame Fortune comes along and she says: "No more of platforms for you; get you to the Gilded Chamber yourself, and stay you there for the rest of your natural life!" I was submissive and I went. "What of your principles now?" said the wags. And I feebly replied: "My principles are quite intact. (1) I am still against the hereditary principle. [The Law Lords are only appointed for life.](2) I am still in favour of the payment of members. [The Law Lords are paid £6,000 a year.](3) I am still in favour of early rising!" [By which he meant short working hours on the Bench.]

20TH.—Talked with Sir Joseph Lawrence.<sup>1</sup> He said he had been lunching with Chamberlain, whose condition is unchanged. He speaks and walks with great difficulty, but his brain is clear. He likes a good joke, and laughs heartily. He still smokes long black cigars and was amused when Lawrence declined one with thanks. Lawrence wrote in his autobiography that he took a leading part at the birth of Tariff Reform in Chamberlain's room at the House of Commons. He claims to have been a sort of political midwife!

25TH.—To lunch with Lady Kitty Somerset. Present: the Duchess of Marlborough; one of Asquith's daughters-in-law; Alfred Lyttelton; L. G.; General Cowans and the Duchess's son. I asked L. G. how he felt when the male suffragist pulled him down at Kennington. He replied: "Whatever excellence my speech had was due to that man. Before I got to the hall, I was very nervous at the thought of making the speech. I ate nothing at lunch, or very little, and what I did eat I rejected. The attack stimulated me and made me forget myself."

In the evening met Jack Seely, who said the War Office is a big job. He has been working early and late. He does not wonder that Arnold Forster and Brodrick broke down. He said Haldane is a man of iron. When at the War Office he usually worked far on into the night. One night Seely went to see him by appointment at 12.30. He found him in his room littered with papers. He said to Haldane, "I suppose you are now going to bed." "No," replied Haldane, "I shall finish these (pointing to the papers) first. They will occupy me until four o'clock." I asked Seely about Robertson,<sup>2</sup> head of the Staff College. He said, "He is a wonderful man. He started life as a waiter. He has educated himself in a marvellous way, and knows several languages." I enquired what form his career would be likely to take. Seely replied, "He will probably become Commander-in-Chief." [I notice that everyone speaks in the same way of Robertson. I have made many enquiries regarding him, all with the same result. Winston told me of him first, and said he was most anxious to meet him. Winston put

<sup>1</sup> M.P. for Monmouth, 1901-6; d. 1919.

<sup>2</sup> Later Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson; d. 1933.



[Photo: Elliott & Fry.]

COLONEL SEELY, NOW LORD MOTTISTONE (1912).



it in his own striking fashion. We were motoring at the time. He turned to me and enquired, "What man is there you have never met and would most like to meet?" On the spur of the moment I said, "The Kaiser." I added, "What would be your selection?" He answered, "I should like to meet an extraordinary fellow named Robertson. From the lowest beginnings, with acclamation he has risen to be head of the Staff College—perhaps the most exclusive institution in the Empire."]

A few days ago I had a chat with Rowland Bailey, head of the Stationery Office, regarding the printing arrangements in connection with the Insurance Act. He said he had used 4,000 tons of paper and cardboard.

25TH.—Seely said that yesterday he had lunch with Edward Grey, who told him that the cleverest saying he knew was the Spanish proverb, "He who does not know, but thinks he knows, is a fool. Avoid him. He that knows, but does not know he knows, is a sleeper. Wake him. He that knows, and knows he knows, is a wise man. Follow him." Seely said that he asked Grey who he thought was the biggest man in the House of Commons. Grey replied, "Undoubtedly Asquith is the first man." Seely said, "Who is the second?" Grey: "Asquith. He is by far the biggest figure. He has the most knowledge and the best judgment." I said, "Like many men with machine-like minds, Asquith occasionally, voluntarily or involuntarily, stops the machine and allows sentiment to prevail. He is soft-hearted in dealing with people he knows and likes. On the other hand, he has a hearty contempt for loose thinkers and confused speakers, and does not refrain from showing it."

SEELY: Yes, that is quite true.

27TH.—Spent the day with L. G.. Winston called on him in the morning. They walked up and down the garden in Downing Street for half an hour in close conversation. L. G. said Winston has now turned his attention to the land question and is about to write a letter on the subject. He (L. G.) has promised to lend him two of his assistants (Hamilton and Harper) to post him in facts and arguments. He told me that John Burns has been very helpful regarding the Insurance

arrangements. J. B. and the heads of other departments have parted with some of their best men to assist the Insurance Commissioners. Without their aid the Act could not have been put into operation.

He spoke of Devlin,<sup>1</sup> the Irish leader. He described him as a great orator, and said that Tim Healy had nicknamed him "the duodecimo Demosthenes." (He is a little man.) As we drove through the streets in the open car, L. G. was freely recognised. I have never noticed this before. He is coming to be better known. We spoke of the Suffragettes. He said Mrs. Asquith had told him that their attacks had quite unnerved the Prime Minister. I could see they have made L. G. himself rather shaky. He said, "The Suffragettes have lost their opportunity. They have ruined their cause for the time being. A poll would show three out of four against them." He added that Mrs. Pankhurst is a clever woman.

I mentioned, much to L. G.'s amusement, that a Cambridge professor, when addressing the Dons on the Insurance Act, had said, "The Act is upon us. You can hear the lapping of the lips throughout the land" (referring to the stamp licking, and parodying John Bright's famous passage, "The Angel of Death has been abroad throughout the land: you may almost hear the beating of his wings," etc.). He told me he intended to let Masterman make the speech dealing with the progress of the Act. He said, "He has worked splendidly. It is his due. He will be able to make a good statement. The figures are good." I asked him whether Asquith has any close personal friends. I said, "He has plenty of limpets." He replied, "No, I don't think he has. Limpets are not really personal friends." He told me that he and Asquith had a long walk and a long talk in the Downing Street garden on the previous evening. It is well secluded and, being on the edge of the Park, quite rural. We (L. G. and I) telephoned from Walton for the result of the Crewe election. We learned that the Liberal had been beaten owing to the split vote caused by the Labour candidate. L. G. was evidently annoyed, but did not say much. He told me Winston was anxious to go to Canada and had asked his advice. L. G. said, "It is a difficult

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Joseph Devlin, M.P.; d. 1934.

question. If he is badly received on the Naval subsidy, it will be a bad thing for the country. No conclusion has been arrived at."

28TH (SUNDAY).—Spent the afternoon with Seely. He had been with the King all the morning, and was late. He again spoke highly of Asquith, who, he said, manages Cabinet meetings with much skill, and composes differences with much tact and dexterity. He inferred that there had been a difference of opinion regarding the Mediterranean question (the Naval force to be kept there, etc.). He said Asquith works hard. He gave an instance. The other day it was necessary for him (Seely) to see the Prime Minister on an urgent matter. He went to Asquith at 6 o'clock. Mr. A. said, "I must go into the House now to speak. Then I have to see the King. At eight I have to receive a deputation. Come to my house at nine." Seely went, but the P.M. had not returned. Mrs. A. asked S. to dine, which he did. At 9.15 in came Mr. A.. Dinner was nearly over. He bolted some food and a glass of wine, and at 9.30 signalled to Mrs. A. to take the family away. By 9.45 he had settled the problem—a troublesome one—and was on his way back to the House of Commons.

We talked of Winston. Seely said Winston had told him that when he was at the Board of Trade he liked the staff but hated the work; when he was at the Foreign Office he liked the work but hated the staff because they were so official and formal; when he was at the Home Office he hated both because of all the unhappiness arising out of Labour troubles, but now he was at the Admiralty he liked both work and staff. *Seely talked of Germany, and from what he implied, I gather that things look none too bright. He seemed anxious.*

He spoke in high terms of Edward Grey. "If I were a revolutionist," he said, "and had to select a member of the Cabinet to lead a revolution, I should select Grey. He is the most logical and revolutionary of us all. If the logical conclusion is that property should be equally divided, he would divide it. Lloyd George would say, 'No, you can't go so far. You must not do too much at once.'" According to Seely, Grey spends all his spare time at his fishing box on the Itchen. His cottage is of the plainest description. He eats the plainest



food, and his sole attendant is a woman who lives in an adjoining cottage.

L. G. and Masterman came to dinner. Long talk on M.'s speech on insurance to-morrow. L. G. said he met Lord Lansdowne one night last week and discussed the land question with him. He said to Lord L. jokingly, "You are going too far for me." L. replied, "Well, I must be drastic." L. agreed that the landlords cannot be left to fix their own price on the sale of land for agricultural purposes. A remarkable concession. L. G. said he would not give way to the doctors. If no other course were open, he would propose to apply the medical contribution for superannuation allowances.

31ST.—Spent the morning talking with Hartshorn. He spoke bitterly of the syndicalist movement, which has for its object the overthrow of the existing order. He says the syndicalists are working to capture the men's organisation by altering the rules so as to take away all power from the leaders, who would thus become mere instruments to carry out the men's resolutions. H. wants to improve the condition of the workers on existing lines. He said he feared L. G.'s land policy would cause much class hatred. I introduced Hartshorn to the future Marquess of Winchester. It was curious to see how much interested they were in each other. Each acted as if he were meeting a new animal for the first time. They got on well.

Dined at the House of Commons with Seely and his wife, Acland<sup>1</sup> and his wife, Sir Henry<sup>2</sup> and Lady Lucy and Lord Robson's son and his wife. Acland said there was a proposal to extend the Press Gallery in the House of Commons, and enquired whether it would be a good plan to allot places to leading foreign journals. Lucy and I said, "No. Many important British newspapers have no place."

Talked with L. G. and Masterman. M. referred to an amusing incident in the House of Commons. He said that while L. G. was speaking, E. G. Pretyman got very excited—quite red in the face. L. G. turned to him, and pointing at him

<sup>1</sup> Later the Rt. Hon. Sir Francis Acland; Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 1911-15.

<sup>2</sup> "Toby M.P." of *Punch*; d. 1924.

with his finger, remarked, "I would warn the Rt. Hon. gentleman to be careful." Pretymen at once tried to restrain himself and seemed quite grateful for the warning. L. G. was immensely pleased with this, and confirmed Masterman's account of what took place. He has a curious way of receiving compliments upon his performances. He discusses them from a detached point of view, laughs when attention is drawn to his sallies, and frequently criticises his speeches, indicating their good points or defects as if they had been made by someone else. But he rarely admits that he has been mistaken in his facts, policy or arguments. His criticism is restricted to the artistic side of the performance, just as a singer would discuss whether he had sung a song well or badly. He always seems sure that he has taken, or is about to take, the right course.

## Chapter X

*The Master of Elibank resigns—Two good repartees—The Speaker's advice to his deputy—The Balkan War—L. G. advocates conscription—The prosperous North.*

AUGUST 4TH, 1912.—Spent the day with Seely at Seaford. He spoke in doubting terms regarding the new Land Campaign. He said, "Why not go straight out for an increase in the super-tax and a free breakfast table?" I said, "Winston's promised letter on land reform has not yet appeared."

SEELY: I shall believe in that letter when I see it.

The conversation again turned to war, on which Seely is always interesting. He said: "During a war you have a few thrilling moments, but as a whole it is a terrible business. Bad food, bad water, insufficient sleep, death and disease in horrible forms, and worst of all the task of urging forward worn-out, suffering troops." He told me that in modern warfare the soldier is most courageous in his first battle. General Botha was asked in his presence, "Who are the most courageous—raw and unseasoned troops or veterans?" He replied without hesitation, "The men who are new to the job. They don't know what they will have to go through. Troops never learn to face the modern rifle bullet without fear." We again discussed Robertson, head of the Staff College.

SEELY: He is the cleverest man in the British Army, and will probably become Commander-in-Chief. He has had a wonderful career. He knows several languages, and is a great authority on military affairs. He holds his position with much dignity.

8TH.—Cook,<sup>1</sup> Editor of *The Field*, told me an interesting story. When the King of Sweden<sup>2</sup> was appointed arbitrator in the Venezuelan dispute, Pulitzer of *The New York World* wrote to Balfour, Dilke and other prominent politicians,

<sup>1</sup> Sir Theodore Cook; d. 1928.

<sup>2</sup> Oscar II; d. 1907.

offering each of them £1,000 if he would ascertain how the King of Sweden regarded his duties as arbitrator. Dilke told Cook, who was formerly on Pulitzer's staff, of the offer. Cook said he would like the commission, so Dilke turned it over to him, and gave him letters of introduction which enabled him to get an interview with the King. Some years later, when the King came to London at the time of the Boer War, he sent for Cook and gave him another interview in which he expressed his sympathy with Great Britain. Cook published this in the belief that he had been given the information as a matter of friendship. A few days later, however, the King spoke at the Royal Academy Banquet and, as a result of the interview, got a tremendous reception. Cook is sure this was a shrewd move by the King to advertise his views preparatory to his speech.

10TH.—I had a long chat on Thursday morning with the Master of Elibank, who has resigned his position as Chief Whip. I said, "I hope this bombshell is not due to anything serious regarding your health." He replied, with some hesitation, "No, nothing serious, but I need a rest." He went on to say, "My retirement is due to two causes—my health and the state of my affairs. I have been thinking the matter over for some time. My original intention was to take a Colonial Governorship and to allow the rents of my estates to accumulate with a view to paying off the mortgages, but this would have been a slow business and I should have been exiled for five years from my friends. I might have taken a Government Department, with a seat in the Cabinet, but such an appointment would have left me no time for my private affairs, and would have involved a heavy strain on my mental and physical powers. A short time ago my old friend Lord Cowdray suggested that I should join his firm. This was a unique opportunity. I saw the Prime Minister, who had known for some time past that some change was necessary. I took his opinion, and he advised me to accept the offer. Now that the decision has been made, I feel that the giving up of this office (he waved his hand and looked sadly round the room) will be a terrible wrench, but I hope to resume my political work before long." He also hinted that there was a personal reason

known to his colleagues, but whether it was one of the two I have mentioned or a third, I did not care to enquire. He spoke with considerable emotion. As I was leaving he said, "You and I have been good friends. We must not get out of touch." Elibank is a warm-hearted creature, and a loyal friend. With him, politics has been an exciting, strenuous game. He has kept the Liberal pack together with much skill.

OCTOBER 1ST, 1912.—A. C. M. Croome, the golfing writer, related two good repartees. A comparative stranger met Ray Lankester<sup>1</sup> in a restaurant and greeted him with, "Hello, Lankester, how are you? I can never remember which is Ray and which is Forbes" (Ray's brother. They are somewhat alike in appearance). "Well," said Lankester, "it is quite immaterial as we are both Mr. Lankester to you!" The other: During an angry dispute with a policeman, —, who thinks himself no end of a swell, remarked, "Do you know who I am? I am ———!" The policeman responded, "That may explain, but does not excuse, your conduct!"

Travelled from London to York with Seely, who said that Ulster is an obsession with Carson. When they dined together recently, C. chatted and joked as usual, but directly the Irish question was mentioned his demeanour changed and it became apparent that he was deeply moved. I asked Seely whether he considered the Army was in really good shape. He replied, "Yes, better than it has ever been. It has its defects, but it has improved enormously during recent years."

2ND.—Spent the day with Donald Maclean,<sup>2</sup> Deputy-chairman of Committees. He said that when he was appointed he saw the Speaker<sup>3</sup> and asked his advice, and in particular whether he should study text-books on Parliamentary procedure. The Speaker replied, "No, I should not do that. They will only confuse you. Use your common sense. Be in the House as much as possible and carefully study its ways and moods." Maclean said, "But suppose I make an error and give a wrong ruling?" The Speaker laughed and replied,

<sup>1</sup> The biologist; d. 1929.

<sup>2</sup> Later the Rt. Hon. Sir Donald Maclean, Deputy-chairman of Committees, 1911-18; Chairman Liberal Parliamentary Party, 1919-22; d. 1932.

<sup>3</sup> Now Viscount Ullswater.

"Never explain; never apologise; stick to what you have said." He subsequently lent him a private book of notes, which has been handed down from Speaker to Speaker. We spoke of Alec Murray. Maclean said Murray had been very kind to him. He felt sorry M. had retired as he had done, as the public would believe that the whole thing was just a game. I said that apart from questions of health and money, I thought Murray was beginning to find it difficult to keep up the somewhat florid note on which he had conducted his office. Maclean agreed.

22ND.—Lunched with Mr. and Mrs. Winston. The latter seems to have completely recovered from her serious illness. She said she had steadily got worse and feared she would become a permanent invalid. One day she said to Winston, "I am a poor wrecked ship. You must take me in hand as if I were one of your battleships. Think my case carefully over, and decide what is to be done." Winston called in another doctor, who changed the treatment and cured her. Winston is charming in his home life, and Mrs. W. a most attractive person, full of charm and vivacity. Little Diana, their daughter, is clever, pretty and intelligent. We spoke of Alec Murray. Winston said M.'s action in leaving the party was a tragedy. He had told M. that his political life was at an end, and that he would never be able to regain his place. Winston added that he had begged Murray to reconsider his decision.

Mrs. W. said, "Why didn't the P.M. decline to let him retire?" Winston laughed and remarked, "The P.M. is the sort of man who would never take that course. If L. G., Grey or myself were to tell him that he had determined to quit politics, the P.M. would reply, 'Well, I'm very sorry (and he would be very sorry), but if you think that is the best course, there is nothing more to be said.' He would wish you good luck, and at once consider how best to repair the breach in his staff." Winston said Percy Illingworth [the new Chief Whip] is doing well, and quoted L. G. as saying that "Illingworth has one good quality. When a man is too troublesome he is able to say, 'Look here, I can't waste any more time with you. I have done all I can, and if you are dissatisfied you must just do what you please!'" Winston said he intends to get the

men in the Navy more pay. He discussed the war,<sup>1</sup> and gave a lucid exposition of the military situation of the opposing forces.

23RD.—Nicoll told me of a long talk with the Earl of Balcarres, one of the Tory Whips, who said he thought Asquith was "waning." B. regards L. G. as the best debater in the House of Commons. B. said Bonar Law had been selected as a *tertium quid*. He had advised Bonar to speak on every possible occasion. He himself was sick and tired of politics. He is an authority on art, furniture and pictures. When describing to Nicoll the Philistinish furniture and decorations in a North Country house he had been visiting, he remarked, "They rose up and smote you forcibly every time you looked at them." He has one of the finest libraries in the country. It has been collected over a long period of years by his family. Nicoll says that B. knows a lot about books and is a highly cultivated person.

24TH.—Called to see L. G. at Downing Street. Mentioned what B. had said about Asquith.

L. G.: Balcarres is quite wrong. A. is stronger in his position than ever. What one loses in energy as one grows older one gains in experience and craftiness—by craftiness I mean the art of getting things done.

We talked of the Balkan War. He said that the Allies having decided on war, the King of Montenegro had taken the initiative, so that the first shot might be fired on his birthday. L. G. seemed to know all about the chief actors in the drama.

26TH.—Spent the afternoon with L. G., Seely and Masterman. We talked of Lord Roberts's speech advocating universal military service. L. G. said, "I am in favour of it. But no party could carry it except in some great national emergency. It should have been proposed immediately after the South African War. Then it might have been carried. It would be a great safeguard of peace. When the conference with the Opposition took place three years ago, I proposed

<sup>1</sup> The Balkan War, in which Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro formed an alliance against Turkey to force her to give local self-government to the Bulgars and Serbs in Macedonia. In October 1912 the Turks suffered heavy reverses and were driven back to the Chatalja lines defending Constantinople.

that six things should be carried on non-party lines. That was one of them. But, as you know, the whole thing fell through. Some day the facts will be published." L. G. is very anxious to take possession of the house I am building for him at Walton, so that he may spend Christmas there. He asked me to hurry up the builders.

When speaking to Seely and me, L. G. spoke highly of Masterman and said he is the cleverest of the rising men. Seely said, "Manner goes a long way. Alfred Mond is a clever man, full of information and good ideas, a much superior man to many of the young men who hold office, but his manner keeps him back."

L. G.: Yes, he is a clever fellow, but difficult to understand.

And then he mimicked Mond's method of talking, much to Seely's amusement.

I forgot to record a recent conversation between L. G., Alfred Mond and myself. I said, "The country is very prosperous—full of vitality. I have just been to the North. I have never seen such signs of prosperity, vigour and enterprise."

L. G.: I quite agree. It is in the air. I sometimes feel I would like to retire on my small private income and devote myself to golf and literature.

R. (laughing): I can get you £1,000 a year for life if you will retire. I could easily get up a fund in the City.

MOND: Let me know when it is coming off and I will buy a bull in Consols.

L. G. laughed heartily, but evidently, on second thoughts, did not like the suggestion implied in Mond's remark as to the rise in Consols, as he said, "They would soon fall again to their natural level."



## Chapter XI

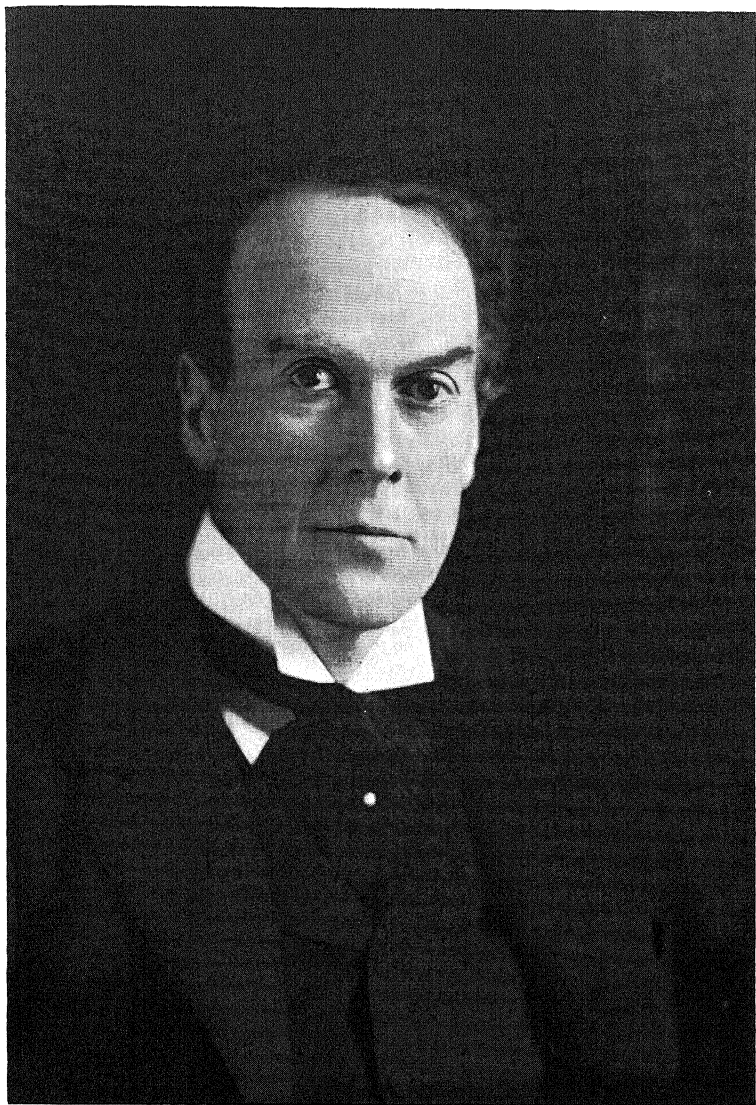
*Alfred Lyttelton on politics and sport—Anxiety over the Balkan crisis—Bonar Law makes headway—The Government defeated—More pay for the Navy—Winston discusses conscription.*

NOVEMBER 2ND, 1912.—Spent the day golfing with Alfred Lyttelton,<sup>1</sup> who said Arthur Balfour had his view of Tariff Reform and Chamberlain had his. When Balfour spoke on Tariff Reform, he did not point out the difference, so that C. at once came along and made a speech pointing out that Balfour and he were in agreement. L. said, "We frequently urged Balfour to make the difference plain, to avoid this sort of thing, but he never would. I still think he was wrong." Referring to a recent visit to Chamberlain, L. remarked, "It is pathetic to see him." L. repeated a story he told me some time ago about the ancient Lord Halsbury.<sup>2</sup> He said, "I sat next to him in the Cabinet. He never said much there. I had made up my mind to get him to appoint old Lorry (A. T. Lawrence)<sup>3</sup> as a judge. I waited a whole year and then spoke to him. He did not say much, but one day I saw him writing at the Cabinet. He half pushed the paper towards me, and then drew it back, but I had read, 'I think your friend's chances are favourable. I shall make him after I have made Bray,' and he did." [And a good judge, too.—R.]. Lyttelton spoke well of Bonar Law. He said, "He is a nice man and is doing well, but I think I will suggest to him that he should not show quite so much asperity in his attacks on Ministers." I said, "I know he thinks mealy-mouthed methods no good." In talking of the Balkan War, Lyttelton said, "The Buffalo [Lord Salisbury] said we had backed the wrong horse."

<sup>1</sup> Secretary for the Colonies, 1903-5, and in his youth a great cricketer, footballer, etc.; d. 1913.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Chancellor 1895-1905; d. 1921 at the age of 98.

<sup>3</sup> Now Lord Trevethin, Judge of the High Court, 1904-21; Lord Chief Justice, 1921-2.



[Photo: Elliott & Fry.]

THE LATE MR. ALFRED LYTTELTON.



After lunch Lyttelton and I joined L. G., the Attorney-General, Masterman and Illingworth. Lyttelton congratulated L. G. on the masterly way in which he had lulled a brooding storm in the H. of C. the other night. L. G. purred, very pleased at compliments from such a quarter. They talked of Gladstone. Lyttelton told a story of his private secretaryship with Gladstone. He was young and inexperienced. He had been told to worry Mr. G. with none but important letters. He said, "I fear I used the waste-paper basket rather freely. One day I threw away a letter from Principal Caird of Glasgow University. A terrible rumpus ensued. Mr. G. said, 'What did you do with the letter?' I said, 'I suppose it went into the waste-paper basket. Who is Mr. Caird?'" "Only the head of one of the Scottish Universities!" growled Mr. G. He then stalked off and made no further complaint, but I felt I had committed an awful crime."

Lyttelton said to me, "I am sick of politics. I like the House of Commons in a way. In the House I have many friends, and I hope no enemies. I have the easiest constituency in the Kingdom,<sup>1</sup> but with all that I shall go when I have done my duty—say, twenty years. What I hate is the horrible length of the sessions." I said, "How do you account for the fact that you and all your brothers are such splendid athletes? Was your father a great athlete or do you get it from your mother?"

L.: No, my father played cricket fairly well, but he was nothing special. I don't know what it was except this. My brother [afterwards Lord Cobham] was the most graceful creature in the world. He played games in the most beautiful and delightful way. Where he got it from, I don't know, but we all imitated him, and you know what imitative animals boys are. My father had a curious way. He was a great lover of the classics and a quaint figure, dear old fellow! When we were playing cricket, he would, despite all protests, seat himself about forty yards from the wicket, looking first at the game and then at a classic which he had brought in his pocket.

The talk turned to Balfour. Lyttelton said, "He must have a strong constitution, but no doubt he would have succumbed had he not retired when he did. Now he seems better than

<sup>1</sup> St. George's, Westminster.

ever." We discussed the indifference of public men to criticism. He said Balfour was quite indifferent to what the outer world said of him, but the criticism of his small inner circle of friends affected him most acutely. He asked me about L. G.. I said, "He is pretty well case-hardened. What he dislikes is being ignored." That made L. laugh. We discussed Northcliffe, whereupon he said with a smile, "He is like a jobber on the Stock Exchange. He is clever in divining what the public will think to-morrow. That sums up his general attitude of mind regarding politics."

7TH.—Lunched with Winston and his wife. I said, "Lady Kitty Somerset (whom we had met) is descended from King Charles II." Mrs. Winston laughed, and said, "We all are—at least I am, through the Duchess of Cleveland." Winston laughed and remarked, "Yes, old Charles II was a splendid fellow in that way." Mrs. Winston made some remark—I forget what—whereupon Winston said, "That's how you caught me." "That does not matter," said Mrs. W. "I've got you. The real question is how to keep you now I've made my capture." Winston: "Well, my dear, you don't have much difficulty in doing that!"

9TH.—Spent the day with L. G., Masterman and Illingworth at Walton Heath. L. G. very worried and nervous regarding the Balkan crisis.<sup>1</sup> He said he had slept badly. Also that the outlook was serious, and that war between Austria and Russia, which would involve France and Germany, seemed probable. Great Britain might even be involved. Pointing to a bank of dark and lowering clouds, he exclaimed, "That is emblematic of the situation. It may be a regular Armageddon. It is the most serious situation that has occurred for years. No body of men ever had a greater responsibility than the Cabinet. Grey and the Premier are very anxious." (I have never seen L. G. himself so much disturbed.) We drove back to Downing Street to tea. L. G. sent for the Foreign Office box, which was awaiting him, and read the despatches while we were at tea. When he had finished he seemed somewhat relieved and said the situation was a little more hopeful.

<sup>1</sup> At this time the Greeks had just captured Salonika, and the Bulgars and Serbs were preparing to attack the Chatalja position.

Talking of the Army, he said we ought to have a million men at call, and that Winston is too selfish for the Navy. Some portion of the increased expenditure should be devoted to the Army.

Discussing the scene in the House last night over the Welsh Disestablishment Bill, which is in McKenna's charge, Illingworth said that McK. is courageous and hard-working, but rather unsympathetic.

Ellis Griffith<sup>1</sup> joined us at Walton. He said to L. G., "Will you name the three best words in the Welsh language—the words which best express their meaning?" This led to a long discussion, which for a time diverted L. G. from the Balkans. But he soon returned to the subject. When we reached Downing Street, Illingworth went to see the Prime Minister, who was to speak at the Mansion House. When he came back L. G. enquired, "Is he going to alter his speech?" "No," replied Illingworth, "he has already given it out to the Press Association and Reuters. The German papers are clamouring for copies." He added, "I feel I ought to accompany the P.M.. I don't like to let him go alone on such an occasion." L. G. replied, "He will have Winston and the Lord Chancellor." I said, "You (Illingworth) had better go home and get early to bed so as to be fit for Monday morning. That is the best service you can render to the P.M." L. G. said, "Quite right. It is useless for us all to wear ourselves out by doing the same work." They both spoke bitterly of Bonar Law's speech regarding the Navy and Army. I repeated what Lyttelton had told me regarding Chamberlain's condition. They were much interested. They spoke highly of Austen Chamberlain, saying he had greatly improved as a Parliamentary speaker, and that he knew the game better than Bonar Law. (Who, by the way, I think is getting into their ribs!)

L. G., Winston, Masterman and Illingworth all talk in rather contemptuous terms of "Bony Law" and the Opposition. They say, "The Opposition have no one. They are trying to persuade themselves that 'Bony' is a big man, but they know he is not. They are acting badly in the House. We

<sup>1</sup> Later the Rt. Hon. Sir Ellis Griffith, K.C., Under-Secretary Home Office, 1912-15; d. 1926.

always recognise when anyone on their side makes a good speech. When Balfour spoke the other day, we all admitted he had done well. They never recognise a great effort by anyone on our side," and so on. I cannot help thinking that old "Bony" is making them sit up. They know he is making headway, although they will not admit this even to each other. They don't like their own physic. He is often indiscreet, and fights with the gloves off. He shows no quarter, and is simple and direct—very different from Balfour, who plays the Parliamentary game in true fencing style, according to rules and regulations. The Government have a big obedient majority, but I can see trouble brewing.

10TH.—Winston speaks gloomily of the Balkan position. He says it all depends on Austria and Germany. If the former maintains her position regarding Serbia, war is inevitable unless Germany declines to support her, which she may do as she has all to lose and nothing to gain. England may be able to keep out of the trouble, but if she stands aloof, and if Germany and Austria are successful in their combat with Russia, France and the Balkan States, she would be left alone in Europe. It might therefore be better for her to join France, Russia and the Balkan States to ensure their success.

We talked of biographies. I said, "Your *Life* of your father is one of the best twelve biographies in the language." Winston replied, "Perhaps it may be if you take that number as your standard. To write a good *Life* you must love your subject or you must hate him."

11TH (MONDAY).—Government defeated on Home Rule Amendment by majority of twenty-two. Four hundred voted. This was worked by the Opposition back benches. Mitchell-Thomson<sup>1</sup> organised it. The Opposition gave up their week-ends and turned up in great force. I am sorry for Illingworth. I hear that the Government will go on. L. G. is dining with the Prime Minister—I suppose to discuss the situation. It is a nasty knock for the Government. The large majority makes members careless in attending divisions. I hear that the international situation is more hopeful. A conference of the powers is to take place, and any trouble is likely to be postponed until then.

<sup>1</sup> Now Lord Selsdon.

15TH AND 16TH.—Spent both days with L. G. and Masterman, the 15th with Jack Pease<sup>1</sup> and the 16th with Illingworth as a fourth. Met the Bishop of London, who enquired how the Cabinet's game was (golf).

L. G.: All square, as usual!

This seemed to please the Bishop.

The Liberals are evidently much perturbed by the events of the past few days. L. G. said, "The House of Commons is on a false basis. The Speaker should do more to assist in carrying through public business—not this particular Speaker, but the person who holds the office for the time being." Evidently the Government think the Speaker did not show them enough consideration in the earlier part of the week. According to L. G., on Wednesday he should have intimated that he would put the motion as the Opposition did not wish to continue the discussion. All four attributed the adverse vote on Monday to a combination of circumstances. (1) The Tory plot. (2) The temporary absence of Gulland, the second Whip. (3) The fact that Illingworth was closeted with the Attorney-General drawing up a Committee panel. (4) The absence of L. G., Winston and the other old Parliamentary hands. (L. G. and Winston were discussing the Navy vote in the former's room.) (5) The fact that Benn and Howard, the Whips on the door, did not realise the position and take the responsibility of putting up someone to continue the debate. They said some of the Tories were meditating a free fight on Wednesday. L. G. laughed and said, "Well, we have some bruisers on our side. As for me, I had picked out my man—Sir William Anson" (a delicate, fragile person). This sally caused much amusement.

On the 15th the Prime Minister and Illingworth played their golf tie in the Treasury Handicap. Illingworth won by two up, giving twelve strokes. He said the P.M. talked more concerning the match than he did concerning the adverse vote on Monday and Wednesday's conflict. He has the power of detachment. Cecil Hutchison<sup>2</sup> told me that Balfour, with whom he had been staying, declared that he would never be

<sup>1</sup> Now Lord Gainford, President Board of Education, 1911-15.

<sup>2</sup> Captain Hutchison, a friend of A. J. B.'s and a well-known golfer.



Premier again, first for reasons of health, and second because it would not be fair to Bonar Law. He would, however, like to be Foreign Secretary.

23RD.—Spent the day with L. G. and Masterman. L. G. asked me what I thought of the P.M.'s speech at Nottingham yesterday. I said, "A good speech of the old-fashioned three-decker type. 'What did Mr. Chamberlain say in 1895,' etc.," L. G. said, "Quite true. No yeast in it. In the House of Commons he is absolutely first-class. He strikes truly and quickly every time. His performances are wonderful, but he has not the art of platform oratory."

L. G. was suffering from a bad cold, but at breakfast was full of fun. He told me two stories which seemed to give him immense satisfaction. During the debate on the Indian Silver transactions, in which the conduct of the Jewish firm of Montagu, and one of the partners, Sir Stuart Samuel, was called in question, one of the members remarked, "This is not the first occasion on which a Jew has got into trouble regarding a transaction in silver." The other was about an old woman who had been to see a cinematograph show in which the Crucifixion was depicted. She was asked what she thought about it. "'Orrible!" she replied, "but let's be thankful it's not true!"

L. G. is evidently rather perturbed at the political situation. He is eagerly awaiting the result of the Bolton election, to be declared to-night. [The Liberal won handsomely. I telephoned the result to L. G., Winston and Masterman, all of whom were highly delighted, as well they might be. Had the election gone against them, the result would have been serious.] L. G. left early to prepare his Aberdeen speech. I said, "How do you prepare your speeches?" He replied, "I go to the drawing-room at Downing Street and think them out. One makes many false starts, but when the right line has been struck it is easy to complete the work."

24TH.—Drove to Walton with Seely. On the road he read his Foreign Office despatches. He said, "The outlook is gloomy. There may be war at any moment between Austria and Servia and her Allies." He locked up the despatch case, and I had it locked up in the safe at Walton while

we played. Winston and his wife joined us. She charming as usual.

Winston said, "I am anxious about the Navy. The men are underpaid. Dissatisfaction is acute. The Treasury people won't believe it."

He confirmed what Seely had said about the international situation. Talking of friendship, he remarked, "I don't readily take to people. I have few friends, but those I have are very dear to me."

Winston said the King had sent for him to go to Windsor. Mrs. W. told me that on the previous evening she and Winston had been attacked by Suffragettes at the theatre. Mrs. Cornwallis-West,<sup>1</sup> who was with them, went for the Suffragettes and told them they ought to be forcibly fed with common sense! Winston is evidently working very hard at the Admiralty. He seemed worn out at the beginning of the day, but picked up later on.

26TH.—Further talk with Winston about the Navy. He said he had been engaged in a terrible fight to get more pay for the men. He originally asked for £750,000 per annum, which the Treasury and the Cabinet had cut down to £350,000. This was £26,000 below the minimum sum that would enable him to give the men such an advance as would be likely to satisfy them.

He said, "I have held out as long as possible. I shall not resign over £26,000, but the Cabinet are making a terrible mistake. I cannot understand L. G.. He usually takes big views. Perhaps he thinks as he does because there are so few Welsh in the Navy. [This by way of a joke!] I shall be able to grant an advance only to the older men. The younger will get nothing. It all makes me very unhappy."

He said he had been working too hard, but was feeling better. He usually sleeps well, but lightly. Recently he has been sleeping heavily, which does not refresh him in the same way.

At lunch we discussed Disraeli. Winston explained to his wife D.'s famous application to Peel for office and Peel's refusal. Having recently read up the subject, I was able to fill

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Churchill's mother.

in the blanks. It was pleasing to see the satisfaction Winston took in furnishing the information, and the evident delight of his wife in the trouble he was taking.

When talking of Seely, Winston remarked, "The Tory Party made a great mistake when they lost him. For them he is an ideal man of the best type—brave, courteous, generous, a fine sportsman, in short a great gentleman, but with sympathy for the poorer classes."

28TH.—Spent the morning with Winston. Evidently much perturbed.

WINSTON: He [L. G.] beat me yesterday, over a paltry £26,000 per annum for the men. I cannot understand him. The £26,000 will just make the difference. It will prevent me from making a handsome addition to the wages of the older section of the men. If this is an earnest of what I am to expect on the estimates, my resignation when they are presented is certain. I am quite prepared. I shall then become a voice, and not a functionary.

R.: Did not the P.M. support you?

WINSTON: He agreed with me, I think, but he did not support me.

We talked of Press cuttings. Winston said, "I never read them now. They don't matter. I remember asking Balfour if he read his Press cuttings. I said to him, 'Sometimes one gets useful hints.' Balfour replied, 'It is like searching through a huge heap of rubbish and finding'—I thought he was going to say 'a half sovereign'—but he added, 'a cigar end'! Wasn't that clever?" concluded Winston. "Such a splendid contrast!"

We talked of conscription. I said it would be unpopular. Winston agreed, but added, "If it were law the people would probably accept it. The Insurance Act shows how law-abiding the British people are. If both parties were agreed, it might come to pass. But the temptation would be too great. One party would be certain to oppose for party purposes."

R.: L. G. is in favour of some sort of compulsory service, but doubts if such a measure could be carried.

WINSTON: Yes, I know he has been talking in that way.

29TH.—Called on Winston (10 a.m.). Found him in bed

busy at work—a desk on his knees and surrounded by despatch boxes. He said he had been writing for two hours. He looked through and altered a memorandum I had written as to the increased Navy pay.

30TH.—Masterman told me that when he telephoned the result of the Bolton election to L. G., he heard a sound like a kiss. He enquired what it was. L. G. said, “I am kissing my wife to celebrate the event.” Then Masterman told him the figures. He then heard the sound again. “What’s that?” he asked. “Oh,” replied L. G., “I was just kissing her again because the figures were so good!”

## Chapter XII

*L. G. on Winston's temperament—Rufus Isaacs recalls his early career—The doctors and the Insurance Bill—Bonar Law talks of resignation.*

DECEMBER 5TH, 1912.—I drove L. G. to Walton. On the road he remarked, "Asquith manages his Cabinet splendidly. He shows great tact. He never tries to crush the individuality of his colleagues. On Monday he said to Illingworth, 'I have read Lloyd George's speech at Aberdeen. It does not contain a single phrase to which even Mr. Gladstone could have taken exception.'" I said to L. G., "How do you stand with Winston?" He replied, laughing, "He is not so annoyed with me as he was. We drove home together last night."

[Winston told me (R.) that he was very pleased at the men's reception of his scheme for increased Naval pay. He showed me a telegram from one of them, thanking him, and said, "It was nice of him to spend two days' increase in wiring to me."]

L. G. continued: "He is too concentrated on his particular office. He has not got the art of playing in conjunction with others. He does not understand the method which made the Welsh footballers so successful—the fine art to which they brought passing the ball from one player to another. When we refuse him anything, he talks of resigning. I think he was very near going back to the Tories some little time ago, but he would have made a mistake. He would have been like a woman who had run away from her husband and then gone back after a long interval."

R.: In regard to this naval business, the truth is that Winston feels very strongly that unless his demands are met, national safety will be imperilled.

L. G.: Yes, I quite admit that, but one has to deal with things on balance. When you are a member of a Government, you must have due regard for your colleagues' opinions.

When speaking of social functions, L.G. said, "I rarely accept private dinner invitations, but make one exception—Lady St. Helier, who has always been a good friend of mine. I prefer to live with my own little circle of friends. I like a cut of mutton, and good, bright company."

Later Winston arrived. We all three talked of the French Revolution. L. G. described it as "the biggest event since the Crucifixion." Someone said, "But how about our revolution, which blazed the trail?"

L. G.: Yes, but it was different.

W.: The French nation has not yet shot its bolt. It will still do much for humanity.

Interesting discussion by L. G. and Winston on the proper method of repelling assaults by Suffragettes. They agreed it was difficult not to retaliate. W. said that in the case of a violent assault he thought it would be permissible to beat the assailant off, although it was most repugnant to treat a woman with violence. A violent woman must take her chance. A man could not stand still and allow himself to be injured, perhaps for life. L. G. agreed. He said that in the case of assaults with a whip or other weapon, the person assaulted was clearly entitled to endeavour to obtain possession of it, using violence if absolutely necessary.

7TH.—Spent the day with L. G., Rufus Isaacs (the Attorney-General) and Masterman. Isaacs told me that twenty years ago he was doubtful about taking silk. He had been very ill, and had been warned by his doctor that he must take more rest. Among other symptoms he had suffered from bleeding from the eyes—a serious symptom of over-work. He said he had called on Bigham, the Judge,<sup>1</sup> who advised him to apply for silk immediately. "Sit down and write the letter of application now." Isaacs said he would think it over. Meanwhile he called on J. C. Mathew, another Judge,<sup>2</sup> who said, "I should take silk. Don't make the mistake I made of postponing your application until you are old and have lost your energy. If you do, you will never apply."

"I thought this a sound argument," said Rufus, "and

<sup>1</sup> Later Viscount Mersey; d. 1929.

<sup>2</sup> Later Lord Justice Mathew; d. 1908.

acted on his advice, but I was still very doubtful. I had been making £7,000 per annum, and spending most of it. Had I not been a success as a K.C., it would have been serious, as I had no other income. The change in work put me right. I never felt that a day in court at *nisi prius* business, which I enjoy, was actual work. What killed me was the drudgery of pleadings, opinions, etc.. It was my practice to go to bed about eleven. I rose at four a.m. and worked until eight. I never had a fire in the room, but dressed warmly, and my servant brought me a cup of tea every hour. I never want more than five hours' sleep. The task of an Attorney-General is very trying. The attendance in the House of Commons occupies so much time." He spoke highly of Rowlatt,<sup>1</sup> the new Judge, who had been the Attorney-General's "devil" [junior counsel to the Crown in civil litigation]. Rufus Isaacs said that as Attorney-General he had strongly recommended Rowlatt for promotion to the Bench, although it was very inconvenient to lose him.

Talked with L. G., who was full of fun and jocularly, about methods of work. He remarked, "I could never do good work by slaving away day in and day out. I believe in giving one's brain and one's body a chance." He laughed and continued, "I am like a hawk. I always swoop down on a thing. Sometimes I miss it, and then I have to go up and strike again."

He spoke of the Welsh Disestablishment Bill. He said, "A body of Liberals want to alter the endowment sections, but there is no object in doing this unless the Opposition will make concessions in return. No one who understands the management of a great public question would be so foolish as to act as suggested. We shall not follow their advice. When it comes to the point, I doubt if many of them will vote against the Government."

He asked me to see Robertson Nicoll with a view to an article appearing in the next issue of the *British Weekly*, putting forward the case of the Dissenters on the endowment clauses.

14TH.—Interesting golfing party at Walton Heath.

<sup>1</sup> The Rt. Hon. Sir Sidney Rowlatt.

L. G., Seely, Masterman, Rufus Isaacs, Donald, McKenna, the Home Secretary and Nicholson, Seely's secretary.

Before we started from Downing Street, it was amusing to see L. G.'s secretaries trying to catch him for a few minutes' conference. One of them said, "We always try to pen him in behind this table. You see, there is a wall at the side and one at the back and the table is in front. We stand at the only exit, and keep him there doing business as long as we can."

The Government had an awkward time last night regarding Welsh Disestablishment. L. G. pulled the chestnuts out of the fire in a clever way.

Talking about bad lies at golf, L. G. said chaffingly to Rufus Isaacs, "You should be an expert. As a cross-examiner you have been dealing with bad lies all your life."

Long talk about female suffrage. Edward Grey is to move an amendment on the Franchise Bill to omit the word "male." Rufus Isaacs said, "That will not alter the law, as the courts will require express words to extend the suffrage to women."

Talking of Prime Ministers, Winston said, "Premiers have to give so many important decisions and are pressed for so many concessions, that they have to protect themselves by some sort of shield. Campbell-Bannerman's was a kindly manner which caused the applicant to go away feeling that his request would if possible be granted, and that if it was refused the Premier would regret the refusal more than anyone else. Arthur Balfour's was a method of statement which left the applicant quite uncertain whether his request had been granted or not, or whether A. J. B. agreed with him or not, and in the case of Asquith it is a gruff, impenetrable reserve which crushes the visitor's enthusiasm."

In discussing Chaplin,<sup>1</sup> Winston said, "If you look through the door of the House of Commons when he is speaking and cannot hear what he says, you would imagine him to be one of the greatest and most effective orators in the House. He has a wonderful oratorical manner."

The other day F. E. Smith told me a good story of a member who, when speaking in the House of Commons,

<sup>1</sup> Later Viscount Chaplin; d. 1923.



remarked, "Mr. So-and-So has sat for so long on the fence that the iron has entered into his soul."

21ST.—L. G. told us that when negotiating on the Insurance Bill the doctors charged him with obstructing a settlement. They said, "We know the Prime Minister would make concessions."

L. G. replied, "Go and see him. Anything he concedes I will agree to."

They went. The P.M. was forcible and emphatic. He remarked, "While I hold my office not another penny shall be conceded if I can avoid it."

The doctors returned to L. G. much cast down, and said, "We find that you really are the more reasonable of the two, and we hope you will use your influence to modify the P.M.'s views."

L. G. obviously enjoyed telling us of the incident.

We spoke of the criticism evoked by the reference in Bonar Law's speech to food taxes. L. G. told me of a long talk with B. L., who said he was not worried by what had taken place. B. L. added, "It may be I shall have to resign the leadership, and if I do I shall not be sorry," or words to that effect. L. G. said, "This shows things have gone pretty far or he would not have said that."

Talking of political experience, L. G. said, "Bonar Law is all right for the rough and tumble, but he is unable to deal with a difficult situation requiring skilful riding. He has not had the experience. He cannot skate over thin ice. He did not begin politics early enough."

22ND.—Mary Anderson, the actress,<sup>1</sup> told Hudson of *Country Life* an interesting story. She was travelling recently on the Continent with her husband. A blind man was put into the railway carriage by his valet. Her husband entered into conversation with him and found he was greatly interested in the theatre. Mary Anderson told him who she was. He at once burst into tears, and exclaimed, "I cannot bear the thought that I shall never be able to see you again." He was an American who had lost his sight through an accident.

<sup>1</sup> Born in 1859 in U.S.A.. Began stage life at 16. Retired at 28 after a most successful career. In 1890 married Mr. De Navarro.

23RD.—Sir Charles Nicholson,<sup>1</sup> M.P. for Doncaster, when speaking of Alec Murray, remarked, "Murray carried his methods too far. He could not keep them up. He retired at the right time, but the Cabinet were much distressed at losing him."

Nicholson was formerly an Inspector in Lunacy. He told me two good stories. One about a lunatic under the delusion that he was a distinguished person, but whose supposed identity varied from time to time. Nicholson said to him, "Who are you?" The man replied, "The Duke of Wellington." "How's that?" asked Nicholson. "When I was here last you were Napoleon Bonaparte." "Yes," said the man, "but that was by another mother!"

The other about a lunatic under the delusion that he was married to some distinguished person—the wife's personality varying from time to time. Nicholson enquired, "To whom are you married just now?"

"The Devil's daughter," said the man.

"That's a strange choice," replied Nicholson.

"Not at all," answered the lunatic. "She's a very nice girl, cooks well and plays the piano."

"Then you must be very happy," said Nicholson.

"Yes and no," answered the lunatic. "Her old folks are not all one could wish."

29TH.—Called and had tea with L. G. at Walton. Full of spirits and jocularly.

R.: The doctors look beat to the world.

L. G.: I think so too.

R.: There is always a psychological moment in a contest when the victor should seize the fruits of victory, otherwise he may let the occasion slip. The doctors should have accepted your last proposals and proclaimed their victory—for it was one. Now the public will regard them as having been defeated.

L. G.: Quite true. When I made the last concession I was afraid the doctors would accept it, and say they had won a great victory, but luckily they let the opportunity slip.

At tea Mrs. L. G. invited me to have some of "David's

<sup>1</sup> d 1918.

apple pasty." Very good. She said for twenty-five years he has always had an apple pasty for tea on Sundays.

L. G. related in dramatic fashion the story of one of the most popular Welsh hymns. He said it was composed by a shipwrecked sailor who was drowned. He wrote the hymn on a scrap of paper and put it in a bottle, which was washed up. L. G. said, "It is called the Bottle Hymn," giving the name in Welsh.

We talked of journalists. He said, "Robertson Nicoll is the greatest living journalist from a polemical standpoint. It is a pity he is too old to edit a daily paper. He would make it an enormous power."

When discussing the food tax agitation in the Conservative Party, he remarked, "They are making too much fuss. They should let the matter drop. They attach too much importance to what journalists and politicians are saying and thinking. A party should put its house in order privately."

## Chapter XIII

*Stafford House for the nation—Sir William Lever's offer—  
Balkan delegates in London—L. G. prepares to meet the  
Suffragettes—Asquith as a leader.*

JANUARY 4TH, 1913.—L. G., Winston, Rufus Isaacs, Masterman, and Ellis Griffith (Under-Secretary at the Home Office) at Walton Heath.

L. G. much elated at the defeat of the doctors. Winston also. He remarked, "My dear David, I am delighted you have beaten them. They acted very badly."

In talking of the doctors, Masterman said, "They managed things badly. They would not negotiate. But," he added, "negotiating with George is like negotiating with the Devil."

L. G. and Ellis Griffith much disturbed that provision is to be made in the Welsh Disestablishment Bill for compensating Welsh curates.

L. G.: As a Minister and a Welsh member I have a right to know of any such proposal and to be heard upon it.

Later on McKenna arrived. L. G. had gone by this time. Masterman told McKenna that any concession to curates would be most unpopular in the Radical Party. McKenna explained that some little-known provisions of ecclesiastical law conferred certain rights on curates, and that these must be dealt with very discreetly. He proposed to make alternative and less extensive provision for them.

Congratulated Winston on his speech regarding Lord Charles Beresford.<sup>1</sup> He said, "He has been asking for it for some time. I did my best to conciliate him, but without success."

<sup>1</sup> Some controversy had arisen over the retirement of Admiral Sir Francis Bridgeman, First Sea Lord (d. 1929). The reason was officially given as ill-health, but Lord Charles Beresford and others asserted that Sir Francis had been dismissed by Mr. Churchill.

Sir William Lever,<sup>1</sup> the soap king, is anxious that the Government should acquire Stafford House, St. James's Park, and turn it into a show place capable of being used for State functions. If the Government will buy the house, which is for sale, Sir William is prepared to spend £100,000 in furnishing it with fine old furniture. I explained this to L. G., who said he was in favour of the scheme and asked me to see Sir William and report.<sup>2</sup>

[Sir William is a public-spirited person—keen on encouraging art. He and I have become great friends, drawn together by two things in which we are both interested—old furniture and after-dinner speaking. He is a man with big ideas. During recent years no one has done more to develop British trade abroad. Like Mr. Cadbury, he has model factories which have served as an example, both here and in America, of what can be done in this direction. He has great foresight. Having seen the coming shortage of fats for soap-making, etc., he has acquired millions of acres in the tropics to grow coconuts. His commercial ramifications here and abroad are gigantic.]

5TH.—Had a chat with Lord Knollys,<sup>3</sup> who spoke in high terms of Asquith. He said he liked L. G., but wished he would not make "those violent speeches," which did great harm. Lord K. also spoke highly of Edward Grey and Campbell-Bannerman. Lord K. is a delightful person, a great gentleman. The Hon. Harry Stonor,<sup>4</sup> who was with him, told me that the King, who is a crack shot, feels he cannot continue first-class shooting as he has so much work to do nowadays. Lord K. said that Beresford's action in fighting Bridgeman's battle is amusing as they are not on friendly terms. Beresford thinks Bridgeman prevented him from being made an Admiral of the Fleet.

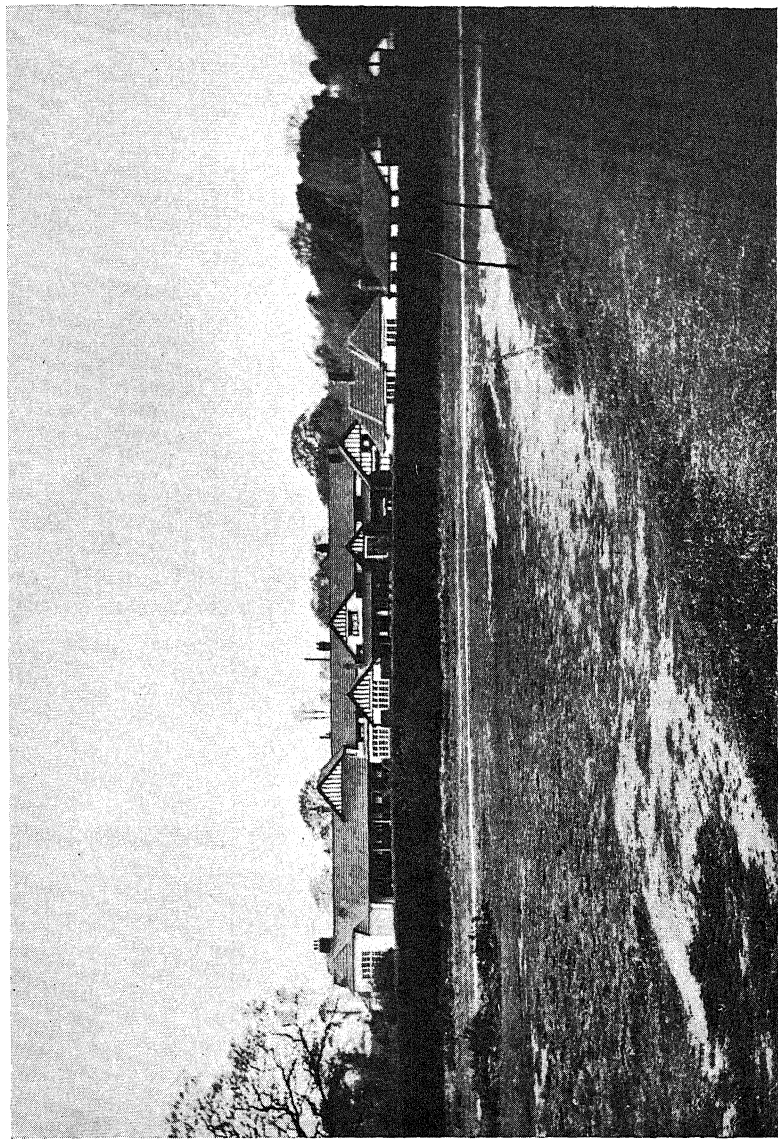
12TH.—Rufus Isaacs said that at a dinner or luncheon he

<sup>1</sup> Later Lord Leverhulme; d. 1925.

<sup>2</sup> Eventually Lord Leverhulme presented the house to the nation. Its name was changed to Lancaster House and it now houses the London Museum.

<sup>3</sup> Private Secretary to King George, 1910-13; d. 1924.

<sup>4</sup> Now Sir Harry Stonor, Groom-in-Waiting and Gentleman Usher since 1882.



WALTON HEATH GOLF CLUB.



sat between the Turkish and Bulgarian delegates to the Peace Conference.<sup>1</sup> The Turkish envoy whispered to him, "We are so glad to be in England. We know we shall receive sympathetic treatment and support from the country which has always been the supporter of oppressed nationalities." Then the Bulgarian envoy whispered, "We know that we shall receive fair treatment from your countrymen. We have had to bear so much. We are delighted to be in London—the only possible place for the Conference," and so on.

I had a party at Walton Heath. Terrible weather. After lunch we sat chatting for two hours. L. G., Rufus Isaacs, McKenna, Mrs. McK., Masterman and Macnamara. Rufus said, "At the next election we must do something for the middle classes." I said, "Leasehold enfranchisement would carry an enormous middle-class vote." They all agreed. Someone remarked, "You would have to reckon with Wedgwood."

L. G.: Yes, but Wedgwood, Outhwaite, Neilson<sup>2</sup> & Co. are all against any change which is not a revolution. You will see they will join with Winterton<sup>3</sup> and his like in opposing all moderate reforms based upon, and recognising, the present system.

L. G. and McKenna between them told an amusing story about a golf-course they had opened in some district where the game was practically unknown. There was a large crowd. In front of the first tee, at a distance of about seventy yards, was a bunker. L. G. drove first and carried it. The shot was received in dead silence. Then McK. drove plump into the bunker, and was astonished to find his effort received with loud cheers. The on-lookers were under the impression that the game was to hit the ball into the bunker!

L. G. related his experiences in the Parliamentary Golf Handicap. Elizabeth Asquith joined him, and engaged him in conversation to such an extent that he was unable even to look at the ball.

<sup>1</sup> Arising out of the Balkan War. It met in London on December 16th, but failed, and hostilities were resumed on February 3rd.

<sup>2</sup> Three advanced Liberal M.P.s.

<sup>3</sup> Earl Winterton, M.P. (U.), Horsham and Worthing since 1904.



JANUARY 1913.—Called at the Treasury to see L. G. regarding Stafford House. Found him hard at work receiving a deputation of doctors, and just about to go to Windsor to spend two days. After we had concluded our business (I think the scheme will go through), he pointed out some of the most interesting articles in the reception room—a large apartment in which deputations are received. Amongst these was the despatch box used to carry the Budget to the House of Commons and for no other purpose. It is always carried by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. L. G. made me roar with laughter by imitating the manner in which Gladstone carried it, hugged up against his chest and walking with a very upright step. Then he showed me the large gilded chair in which the King used to sit when he came to the Treasury in the old days.

We talked of the forthcoming suffrage deputation. I said, "You will have to look out for trouble. McKenna [the Home Secretary] tells me they may do something violent."

L. G.: They may, but I must just take my chance.

MASTERMAN: I should have that table (a large one) between you and the deputation, anyway!

L. G.: Not a bad ideal!

Thereupon he called in the messenger who looks after the room and gave instructions for the table to be turned round.

"Now," said L. G., "I am off to Windsor to spend two days with the King and Queen."

18TH.—Spent the morning with L. G., Masterman and Illingworth. L. G. was so yesterday. He is much elated regarding the Insurance Act position. Illingworth said the Cabinet had stood by L. G. in the most loyal manner. He added, "The P.M. is a splendid man to work with. When I had that trouble some weeks ago over the snap division which caused the Government so much difficulty, he never uttered a word of complaint. The first thing he said was, 'I am so sorry for your sake, old man!'" I said, "He has a wonderful knack of keeping his Cabinet together, and has no jealousy in his disposition."

ILLINGWORTH: Yes, you are quite right. He is always

glad to learn of his colleagues' successes. Nothing gives him more pleasure.

L. G. referred to a paragraph in the *Belfast News Letter* in which a lady correspondent described meeting L. G. at the Walton Heath Golf Club. She said she loathed his politics, but that he had a charming manner in the golf club. I laughed and said, "Well, that's one good quality, at any rate. It's something to have a good golf-club manner!" L. G. repeated this to Masterman with much gusto.

Illingworth talked of Alec Murray. He said, "He is a great friend of mine. I am sorry he took the course he did, although it has enured for my benefit. Our people are very sick with him." I said, laughing, "Well, he has substantial compensations and is only forty-two."

ILLINGWORTH: That's true, but there is the other side.

L. G.: The other day I saw Alec. He was exuding oil from every pore! (He is now with Lord Cowdray in the Mexican Oil business, and although he has charming manners, they are on the florid side, which is the point of the joke.)

I asked how Simon's<sup>1</sup> speech on Home Rule went off. L. G. said, "Not very good, I thought." Masterman agreed. I said, "Simon is a brilliant creature—the ablest of all the young men in politics. I place him next after Asquith, L. G., Grey and Winston."

[Simon is very courteous but, when engaged in conversation, has a habit of thinking of other things—not a political asset.—R.]

19TH.—A conference story. Edward Grey lost his watch at a conference. He said to a delegate, "I cannot think what has become of my watch!" A few days later this delegate brought him the missing watch. "Where did you get it?" asked Sir Edward. "I got it from a colleague," was the reply. "How did he get it?" asked Sir Edward. "I don't know," was the answer. "He does not know I have taken it from him!"

McKenna told me a story concerning Alec Murray (Elibank). Someone asked his man, "What recreation does Mr. Murray take? Does he fish or shoot, or ride or play golf?" "No," said the man. The enquirer continued, "What does he

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Simon, Solicitor-General, 1910-13; Attorney-General, 1913-15.

do when he is at home? Does he play cards or read?" "No," was the reply, "he just telephones!"

McKenna said one of the chief pleasures of advancing age is a sense of detachment which enables one to watch the drama as played by other people—one of the most interesting things in life. He spoke highly of Asquith, and said he had often seen him adopt the views of his colleagues in preference to his own, and then support the alternative opinions by more forcible arguments than those used by the persons whose views he had adopted. Directly he saw that the opinion of someone else was better than his own, he adopted it in the most zealous way, without jealousy or reserve and without endeavouring to rob another of the credit to which he was entitled.

25TH.—L. G., Masterman and Illingworth.

R. to L. G.: How did you get on with the Suffragettes at the deputation?

L. G.: Not badly.

R.: Were you nervous?

L. G.: No. Danger is a curious thing. It braces me up.

R.: Don't you think the Tories have made a mistake in trying to smash the Franchise Bill? Is it not a godsend for the Government in view of the suffrage differences?

L. G. (laughing): You have hit the nail on the head. This is the second time in two months they have let us out by a tactical blunder. Bonar Law may talk as his people talk in their clubs. He may reflect the Conservative mind and therefore please his followers in the country, but he doesn't know the Parliamentary game. He is almost invariably wrong. For real business give me old Arthur Balfour!

We spoke of Harcourt's<sup>1</sup> suffrage speech, in which he attacked L. G.. I said, "It has made the public think that the Cabinet are really at loggerheads." "There is not a word of truth in that," replied L. G., "but the speech was a mistake. It was unnecessary, and has created a wrong impression, as you say. There, again, it is like children playing roughly with each other. The rough play often leads to real blows. If I were to reply and carry on the discussion, I know who would look foolish in the long run. Lulu (Harcourt) is all right if he has

<sup>1</sup> Later Viscount Harcourt, Secretary for the Colonies, 1910-15; d. 1922.

*January 1913]*

MORE PAGES FROM MY DIARY

six months in which to prepare, but he is no good in a rough and tumble." Illingworth said the speech was written but delivered well.

MASTERMAN: Harcourt is very pleased with himself. I lunched or dined with him—I forget which—on the day when he made it. He said that he had a good reception, and seemed to have no regrets or misgivings.

[The Speaker has assented to my proposal that special Gallery privileges should be granted to the representatives of the Colonial newspapers who hitherto have had none. This should be a valuable arrangement, beneficial both to the Mother Country and the Colonies.]

## Chapter XIV

*The friendships of Party Leaders—Bonar Law on colleagues and opponents—Suffragettes blow up L. G.'s new house—The trials of the Home Secretary—French prophesies the coming war.*

FEBRUARY 1ST, 1913.—Mrs. Lloyd George told me that the Queen had a long chat with her regarding the Insurance Act, in which she displayed much interest. Her Majesty's chief anxiety was that the maternity benefit should be made as advantageous as possible for poor mothers.

7TH.—To-night after dinner, when driving home in a crowded motor car, L. G. sat on Rufus Isaacs's knee and I on L. G.'s. Everyone full of jollity—and all teetotallers, or nearly so.

8TH.—Spent the evening alone with L. G.. He said he had got the Government out of a nasty situation on the previous night, when the party rebelled on the Scottish Temperance Bill owing, as he alleged, to mismanagement. He sent for the Prime Minister, but he was in his bath and could not come. "Then," said L. G., "I had to make a decision myself. It was one of those cases in which two courses are open, either to change the policy or endeavour to force the matter through. I decided on the second alternative, and after some trouble brought our people round."

L. G.: The Lord Chief<sup>1</sup> is still very bad. He will never go back.

R.: Will Rufus get the position?

L. G.: Yes, if he will take it.

R.: He might hold on for the Chancellorship.

L. G.: Yes, but the task of waiting for dead men's shoes is an ungrateful one. I remember that X held on because he heard that Y's heart was weak and that Z, another aspirant for Y's job, used to look at X (who was himself very ill) to see if he was shrinking any further!

<sup>1</sup> Lord Alverstone, resigned October 1913; d. 1915.

R.: We never hear anything of Loreburn now.

L. G.: He is old and disgruntled. The other day Birrell went to hear the Home Rule Debate in the Lords. In the Lobby he met Loreburn who said, "Come and have a talk!" "I can't," said Birrell, "I am going to hear Morley speak!" Loreburn retorted, "I am surprised that you want to hear him speak!" Loreburn is of a jealous nature. Twelve years ago he invited me to dinner. The talk turned on Parliamentary eloquence. I said, "Asquith is easily the first debater on our side." Loreburn acted peevishly to me all evening. And he never invited me to dinner again!

We spoke of the friendships of Prime Ministers and Party Leaders.

L. G.: It is unwise for a Prime Minister to have as his chief friend a member of his Cabinet. If he does, he creates jealousy and may often occasion misapprehension when he takes a line known to be that of his intimate but opposed to the views of some of his other colleagues. Disraeli, Gladstone and Asquith all selected for their private friends men who were not in their Cabinet. Balfour did the same, up to a point, but was very friendly with Alfred Lyttelton—an error from a political point of view.

In reference to the Marconi libels,<sup>1</sup> L. G. said that he had taken advice as to instituting proceedings, but F. E. Smith had advised him to do nothing as the defendants would cross-examine him as to the attacks which he had made on other people, and would tell the jury that a person with his record must not be thin-skinned. L. G. added, "Perhaps he was right. Joe [Chamberlain] never took any action regarding aspersions on his character—perhaps for the same reason."

<sup>1</sup> What was known as the "Marconi Affair" related to the purchase by Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Rufus Isaacs of shares in the American Marconi Company at a time when the Post Office was discussing the terms of a contract with the British Marconi Company. The two concerns were separate, and there could in fairness be no accusation of anything beyond indiscretion. But Mr. Lloyd George, being Chancellor of the Exchequer, was too formidable a figure to be let off lightly. The matter became the subject of an inquiry by a committee of the House of Commons. The majority acquitted him of serious blame, and a majority of the House of Commons replied to the Opposition's attacks by a vote of confidence.

9TH.—Lunched with Max Aitken at Cherkley Court, Leatherhead, to meet Bonar Law. Spent the afternoon playing golf with him.

B. L. remarked (laughing), "Lloyd George is a dangerous rascal, but a charming man, unspoilt by success." B. L. said he was unmoved by Press criticism. He spoke highly of Austen Chamberlain, whom he described as "loyal, and straight as a line." He said that A. C. is an excellent debater. He had never seen anyone improve so much in Parliamentary speaking. He described Asquith as the best debater in the House of Commons. I asked him what he thought of the younger politicians, to which he replied, "It may seem a large order, but I could form a Government equal to the present one without including a single man now on the Front Bench." I said, "It would be a large order—a very large one." He spoke highly of Aitken's ability as a man of business.

Bonar Law said he would be glad to get away for a holiday. The strain of the Session had been very great. He did not know how he would have got on had it not been for his golf. The chief strain was in preparing important speeches. He found no difficulty in speaking in the House of Commons on ordinary occasions without preparation. He spoke highly of Balcarres<sup>1</sup> and said he would be a great loss.

R.: You have only to hold on and criticise the other side and you will probably be Prime Minister some day. Look at Campbell-Bannerman!

B. L.: Yes, but I fancy they (the Liberals) will come in again. There is no doubt that the people are more in sympathy with them than with us.

R.: I believe you are right. They think you are the party of property, and most people have none!

B. L.: Quite true, but my experience is that the aristocracy are anxious to improve the position of the common people.

R.: Yes, but how about the plutocrats?

Bonar Law smiled.

In discussing Tariff Reform I said, "When Chamberlain began his crusade it looked as if he would carry all before him,

<sup>1</sup> Who had just succeeded his father as Earl of Crawford.

but soon the great silent forces of the country arose and changed the aspect of affairs." "Very true," replied Bonar Law, "but I think that had Chamberlain been leader of the party, he might have rushed his scheme through at the beginning. It was hardly in human nature for a leader to adopt, and endeavour to force through at imminent risk, the scheme of a colleague with which he was not in complete sympathy."

He told me that when Balfour ended his recent speech on the Home Rule Bill with the phrase, "Then you will be the assassins!" Austen Chamberlain leant over to someone on the Front Bench and said, "That is the advantage of having a reputation for good manners! Bonar Law could not have said that!" I doubt if B. L. is very fond of Balfour. I gather this from small indications. He said someone had remarked that when Balfour retired he would be placed on a pedestal, but that someone else had added that the disadvantage of being on a pedestal was that you were liable to fall off.

19TH.—Early this morning my bedside telephone rang, and a message came through to say that part of the house I am building for L. G. at Walton Heath had been blown to smithereens by the Suffragettes.

[This outrage caused a sensation all the world over. I was inundated with Press cuttings. Speaking at Cardiff the same evening, Mrs. Pankhurst admitted that she had incited her followers to commit this outrage and took personal responsibility for the occurrence. She was subsequently tried at the Old Bailey and sentenced to three years' penal servitude. I met her years afterwards, as appears from my *War Diary* (page 208) and had quite a pleasant chat.

L. G., who was on the Continent, sent me this letter:

MY DEAR RIDDELL,

I am so sorry that you have already found me such a troublesome and expensive tenant. I seem not merely to be born for trouble to myself but to my friends as well. I hope you can make the W.S.P.U. pay I should have thought that after Mrs. Pankhurst's speech admitting that she incited the outrage her organisation could be made responsible in damages.

I leave here to-morrow for Cannes. Thursday I quit the Riviera for Paris—where for *greater safety* I have invited my wife to meet me.



We must have a game at Walton on my return. I played yesterday with Bonar Law. Glorious weather.

Write me Cannes *poste restante*.

Kindest regards to Lady Riddell,

Ever sincerely yours,

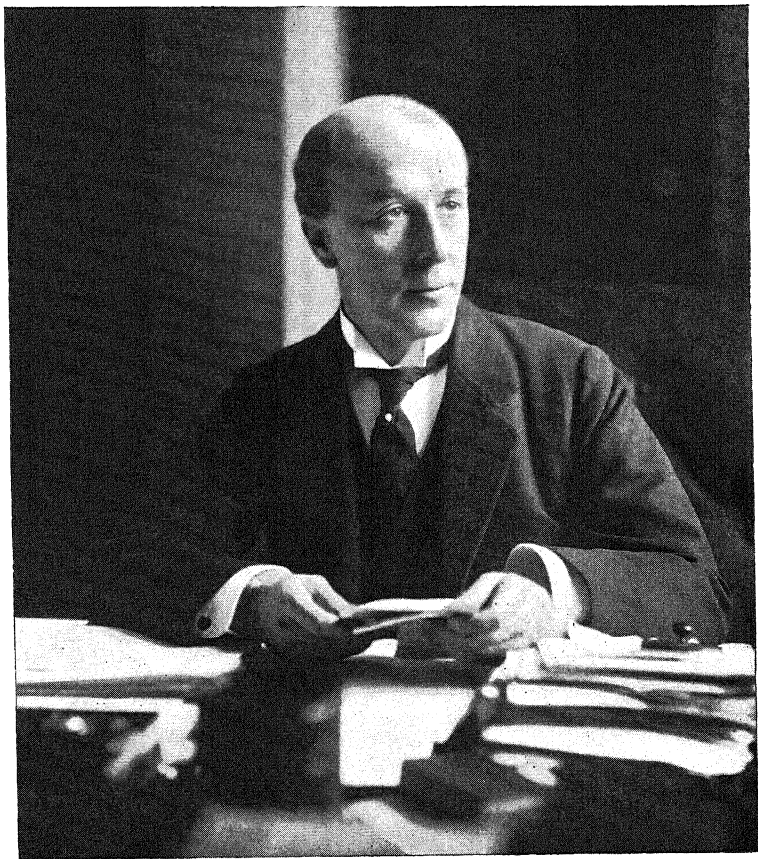
D. LLOYD GEORGE.

I did not attempt to make the Suffragettes responsible for the damage.]

22ND.—McKenna told me that he had determined to prosecute Mrs. Pankhurst for inciting outrages as she had admitted responsibility. I said, "You have had a rough time during the past twelve months." He replied, "I have, what with strikes and Suffragettes. I am glad to learn there is at least one person who sympathises with me. Hitherto it has been impossible to let a woman die of hunger in prison. That would have brought about a revulsion of public feeling. But now things may be different. The public are so incensed. It is, however, difficult to control the prison officials even in the matter of solitary confinement. They will relax the regulations when face to face with the difficulties of a particular case. It is difficult to carry out a policy when brought into actual conflict with the management of a particular case. Even the Home Secretary and the officials at Whitehall share that feeling."

McKenna is a kindly man with lots of courage and determination. He often looks harassed, as well he may. He has a rotten job.

23RD.—Had a long talk with General French. He says that the Committee of Defence has grown too big and unwieldy, and that the preponderance of civilian members has become too great. He spoke in high terms of Asquith, and said that if he had to face a big war he would rather see him Prime Minister than anyone else. His judgment is so good, and he acts with such calmness and decision. The General said, "We have had anxious times during the past few months, and have had to make most important decisions. Several nights I have been unable to sleep knowing that at any moment I might be called up on the telephone to receive news which would make it necessary for me to mobilise." He spoke highly of Seely, and said he had acted with great judgment and coolness in



[Photo: Russell, London.]

MR. REGINALD McKENNA (1913).



*February 1913]*

MORE PAGES FROM MY DIARY

trying situations. He described him as the right man in the right place—a man with sufficient knowledge of military affairs to enable him to form a sound judgment, but one who did not place too much reliance on his own military experience. The General said that the Germans and Austrians were not ready for war, but that in twelve months' time their position would be much improved. He seemed to regard war as certain in the future.

## Chapter XV

*L. G. visits his wrecked house—Bonar Law's anxieties—A Welsh evening in Downing Street—Asquith and the Marconi affair—Winston prepares to "risk all"—Talk of a National Party—Some famous speeches—War alarms on the Continent.*

MARCH 1ST, 1913.—Illingworth told me that he had dined at Buckingham Palace on the previous evening. There was a large company—he thought about fifty. After dinner, the King had most of the guests brought to speak to him, and engaged in a vivacious conversation with them.

Illingworth said that he always left the party managers in the constituencies to find their own candidates, but if they were unable to do so, he submitted a name and expected his nominee to be selected unless there was some strong objection.

4TH.—With L. G. and Mrs. L. G. I visited the house at Walton Heath to see the effects of the explosion. L. G. said that insufficient attention had been paid to the fact that if all the bombs had exploded twelve workmen would have been killed. He was very indignant and said he should see the Attorney-General at once. He told me that when he got news of the explosion, he wired to his wife from the South of France, "Take care of the little parcel," meaning Megan, his daughter. He gave an amusing account of the stranding of his party in a remote French village. T. P. O'Connor and Sir Charles Henry sat up all night and played bridge. L. G. opened the window of the gloomy bedroom allotted to him, had a huge fire lighted, muffled himself in his overcoat, and slept soundly for seven hours, greatly to the envy of the other two.

He related that when Masterman began to reply to insurance questions in the House of Commons, he (M.) was nervous and did badly. "I told him," said L. G., "to get a real good striking answer prepared, and then read it in a firm, aggressive manner, so as to strike terror into the hearts of the

other side." He continued, "Charlie [Masterman] took my advice and made a great success. That gave him confidence, and he continued to do well."

8TH.—Breakfasted with L. G., taking with me Howard Frank,<sup>1</sup> the auctioneer, who is acting for Lever in regard to Stafford House. We placed proposals before L. G., whereby Lever would provide works of art and furniture to the value of, say, £150,000, if the Government would use the house for national purposes, Lever's object being to provide an exhibition mansion containing fine specimens of British pictures and furniture. L. G. said he would support such a scheme, but would be no party to housing the London Museum in Stafford House as proposed by Harcourt. The house must be available for entertaining national guests, such as Colonial premiers. It was arranged that Frank should meet the Cabinet Committee appointed to deal with the matter, and meanwhile ascertain exactly what Lever is prepared to do.

L. G. had a long talk with Frank on the land question. He (L. G.) said he had come to the conclusion that on most large estates the farmers did not pay the full value of the land, and that there was no reason why they should not pay higher wages to their men.

Touching these breakfasts, I have omitted to mention that I introduced Commander Evans of the Scott Expedition to L. G., and persuaded him to advise the Cabinet to contribute £10,000 to the fund. This he did on the understanding that a certain additional sum was provided by subscription.

15TH.—Golfed with L. G., Masterman and Seely. Talked of the manners of leading barristers in the old days. L. G. said they were insufferable. He added, "Asquith used to have something of that manner. He was superior and unapproachable. But he learned his lesson and gave up that style." [When describing the manners of a legal luminary, a wit remarked, "He has replaced old-fashioned aloofness by synthetic affability."]

Seely said he had a surprise in store for the House of Commons and the country. The Army Flying Corps now have 123 aeroplanes ready for action. He told a good story

<sup>1</sup> Sir Howard Frank, Bart.; d. 1932.

about Dr. Butler of Trinity, Cambridge. There was much discussion as to who should reply to the King's speech when he visited the University. At last a witty Don said, "I think there is no alternative to Dr. Butler. No function is complete unless he returns thanks for something. I have no doubt that on the Last Day, when the last trump has been sounded and all the Judgments have been pronounced, Dr. Butler will be heard addressing the Almighty something in this fashion, 'On behalf of the sheep and the goats, I rise to thank you for the admirable, I might say delightful, way in which you have conducted the proceedings to-day. It was of course impossible for your decisions to give universal satisfaction, but I am sure that everyone will agree that you have performed a most delicate and unpleasant task in a most impartial and considerate manner. In conclusion, I think I am entitled to say that we may regard you as a Trinity man yourself.'"

L. G. enlivened the conversation with a number of stories from Anatole France's books, which he related in an amusing, dramatic way, keeping us in roars of laughter. The three were much interested in the information I gave them as to the popularity of different novelists. L. G. and Seely knew nothing of the huge sales of the novels of Mrs. Barclay and Charles Garvice.

16TH.—McKenna told me that the Militant Suffragettes were now few, and that he hoped soon to have them all by the heels. He is a resolute sort of man. He says he is very tired and worn.

Talked with Bonar Law, who seemed depressed and dejected. He said his holiday had done him good, but it had not been long enough, and he had returned still tired and jaded. The House of Commons is dull and apathetic. He had never seen it in such a condition.

[L. G. and Masterman said the same thing the other day. "It is like a dead house," remarked L. G..]

B. L. asked me if the other side were "expecting trouble." I said I thought not. They all seem in high spirits. B. L. seemed surprised. He said, "Asquith is a wonderful man. He never seems to trouble about anything. At least, he never shows

it." I said, "He proceeds on the principle that usually things work out all right." "Yes," said Bonar Law, "but there comes a time when they don't." I responded, "But worrying does not keep off the catastrophe. It only tends to produce it." He laughed and said, "Perhaps you are right." B. L. seemed more worried than I have yet seen him. He is usually calm, but I noticed to-day a nervous movement with his hands and a slight irritability I have never seen before. No doubt he is having an awkward time. I felt quite sorry for him.

Musical evening at L. G.'s house in Downing Street. Mary Davies, the celebrated singer of a generation ago, at the piano, solos by Welsh professional singers (ladies), Welsh hymns by all the Welsh present. L. G. himself sang fervently and vigorously. Sitting on the arm of my chair and translating the words for my benefit, he gave vivid descriptions of the hymns and the lives of their authors and composers. For example, "He (the author) is describing how the pilgrim has reached Mount Sion and how he is looking back over the twists and turnings through which he has reached his goal and wondering how he ever got there." Then again, "The struggling Christian is nearly overcome by the waters of Jordan and the dangers and difficulties of the journey, but sees his friends on Mount Sion, which gives him fresh courage. He says, 'If they have reached there, why should not I?'" I said, laughing, "Well, if we see you there, we shall certainly know there is a good chance of our pulling through." Whereupon Masterman said, "If we see Riddell there, we shall think that Jordan is a fraud." "In fact," remarked the Rev. Mr. Williams, "that there is no Jordan."

L. G. asked me to stay on after the others had left, which I did, and had a long talk with him and Mr. Williams, who was staying with him. L. G. said, "Bonar Law is a nice man. I like him, but he is not Liberal in sentiment. He is just the hard Glasgow commercial man. He has no sympathy with the working classes." I denied this, and said that B. L. had to face difficulties in his party just as L. G. had to reckon with some of the old-fashioned Liberals. L. G. admitted I might be right. Talking of oratory he said, "My speaking is founded on the oratory of the Welsh pulpit. The imagery I use is com-



paratively common amongst Welsh preachers." Then he gave a dramatic account of a speech of his which wound up with the parable about gathering sticks after a storm. ("We shall have serious times, but when I was a boy I always knew that the best time to gather sticks in the woods was after a storm.")

L. G.: Before I could show the application of my parable the whole audience rose at me, and I only finished what I had to say for the benefit of the reporters.

He continued, "There is a peculiarity about Welsh oratory. I don't believe it exists in any other language. The speakers and the audience lose themselves in a sort of ecstasy."

A delightful evening. The place with its historic associations. The strange language. The mingled air of poetry, music, piety and gaiety was most attractive.

19TH.—The Marconi affair in full blast. Masterman says that L. G. has offered his resignation to Asquith, who has ridiculed the idea. The Prime Minister had counselled silence, and was chiefly responsible for the course pursued. Indeed, he had written advising that no notice should be taken of the attacks, which he described as "scurrilous."

20TH.—Called at the House of Commons for L. G., Rufus and Masterman. Spent the afternoon with them at Walton Heath.

21ST (GOOD FRIDAY).—Long talk with Winston Churchill. He outlined his views on National Service, and said he must make an early declaration on the subject. He proposed to say that while the Navy was thoroughly efficient and that there was no cause for immediate alarm, he could not see his way to oppose a scheme for National Service. He continued, "I shall be perfectly loyal to Asquith, my chief, to whom I owe so much, but think I shall take this line without consultation. One must trust in a matter of this sort to one's own flair. I am prepared, when the time comes, to throw my hat over the wall and risk all. I do not want to take any drastic action for another twelve months, not until my work at the Admiralty is finished, which it should be by then." He asked for my views on National Service. I said I doubted its popularity. Winston then proceeded to put forward a proposal for a National Party. He said, "The time will soon be ripe for a fusion of the two parties. A

National Party could secure great aims. The Conservative section in exchange for a system of National Service could agree to a minimum wage for agricultural labourers and other trades, and to a reform of the land system. Our national life requires more organisation and more discipline. There are sensible men in both parties who are tired of the existing state of things. In both parties there are fools at one end and crackpots at the other, but the great body in the middle is sound and wise." I said I doubted the possibility of forming a National Party. Of necessity the "haves" would form one party and the "have nots" another. Their aims and objects were quite at variance. Parties might be readjusted, but the tendency would not be towards a National party, but towards a Capital party as opposed to a Labour party. To this he replied that his combination would contain all the talents, and would be sufficiently strong to smash all other parties. I said I had my doubts. He expressed great concern for L. G. and Rufus Isaacs in regard to the Marconi incident, and said that his heart had bled for them. He described L. G. as "that brave, honest little man, on whom so much depended." He continued, "L. G. is favourable to National Service." I remarked, "The people don't like the prospect of compulsion. They don't look forward to life in the barrack square. They never see anything of the bright side of military life. Soldiers, like convicts, are carefully kept apart from the people." He said, "We should have to begin gradually, and the proposals would not affect present-day voters—only their sons under twenty-one."

He spoke with force and emotion of what would happen if our "tin pots" (ironclads) were put out of action for any reason. "Nothing," said he, "would stand between us and ruin. We should fall a fat and easy prey." He said, "We want to preach to the people the noble destinies of this great England. We want a far-reaching Imperial policy in which all petty differences will disappear." He said that the Liberal Party contained the only men in politics worth working with and the only men with whom he would care to work. Later he told me he had given up his practice of writing letters and now dictated them. "Now," he added, "it is a pain to me to write a letter." Then, with a laugh, he said, "I have come to the conclusion

that no public man should allow his writing to be known, so that all his letters might be written by secretaries without offence to his correspondents." He referred to the change which had come over the relations of Cabinets. "For instance," he said, "my father wrote innumerable letters to Lord Salisbury, who always replied at length, both parties corresponding in their own handwriting. Now, if I were to write frequent letters to Asquith, he would think me mad and would soon want to be rid of me."

I asked him whether Lord Roberts wrote his own speeches. He said he probably wrote the major part of them. Only the other day Winston received from Lord R. a letter comprising four quarto pages of closely written matter, all in his own hand and containing not a single bad sentence.

We played golf in the afternoon—wet and stormy weather interspersed with sunshine. Winston stood still in one of the intervals and, calling me to his side, recited Burns's beautiful lines,

Why am I loth to leave this earthly scene ?  
Have I so found it full of pleasing charms ?  
Some drops of joy with draughts of ill between;  
Some gleams of sunshine 'mid renewing storms.

22ND.—A large party at Walton Heath. L. G., Winston, McKenna, Masterman, Illingworth, Mrs. Winston, Mrs. McKenna, Henry McLaren, M.P., and his wife.

Drove home with L. G., who told me that Bonar Law had spoken to him in a friendly way regarding the Marconi incident. B. L. said he was sure there had been no moral wrong on L. G.'s part, but that he would have to raise the question in the House. L. G. offered to produce to him all his private books and papers, but B. L. said there was no occasion for this, as he had no doubt on the subject.

We spoke of the future of political parties.

L. G.: The working classes will never improve their position without the assistance of able men in other walks of life, men trained in business, affairs, controversy and so on. All revolutions have shown this to be true. In the French

Revolution the leaders were lawyers and educated men—Robespierre, for example.

R.: What do you think of the possibility of a National Party?

L. G.: I think it impossible, but it might be practicable to detach from the Tories some of their men with advanced views.

R.: Lord Henry Bentinck,<sup>1</sup> Hills<sup>2</sup> and men of that type.

L. G.: Yes.

L. G. and Masterman dined with me. Called for the former at Downing Street. Found there an old Welsh parson named Owen, the son of a farmer who had been turned out of his farm—I think in 1860—because he had proposed a Radical candidate in opposition to his landlord's nominee.

Mrs. L. G. bears this Marconi trouble well—no fuss. L. G. referred to her to-day with many expressions of gratitude. To the dinner he brought a small Welsh book, the life of a well-known Welsh minister. He entertained us by translating passages from the minister's sermons—very homely and amusing: the sermon on Jonah, for example—but how much is due to the original and how much to L. G., I cannot say.

After dinner we talked of speeches. He said Asquith's best speech was the one he made on the death of Campbell-Bannerman. Winston's best, the speech on Socialism at the Dundee Election in 1908. Campbell-Bannerman's, the Albert Hall speech in 1905. Sir William Harcourt's, the Southport speech in 1877 or 1880. Disraeli's, the Manchester speech in 1873 and the speech on Peel, which L. G. said was the finest piece of invective in the English language. He referred in terms of high praise to Birrell's speech on the third reading of the Education Bill in 1906, and mentioned the fine passage, "Having divested your schools, colleges and universities of all religion, by what alchemy are you going to hold together a society in which there are and must be such striking diversities in the conditions of the individuals of which it is constituted?" Masterman agreed concerning all these speeches. It was interesting to see the great knowledge of the oratory of the last sixty years displayed by both of them.

<sup>1</sup> d. 1931.

<sup>2</sup> Now the Rt. Hon. J. W. Hills.

L. G.: Chamberlain's speech at Glasgow was splendid. If I were going to advise a young man how to learn to present a case, I should tell him to study that speech carefully.

Masterman referred to Bright's "Angel of Death" speech, and said that Mrs. Masterman's grandmother, who was in the House of Commons when it was delivered, had told her that when Palmerston rose to reply he referred to John Bright as "The Right Honourable and *Reverend* gentleman." This caused the House to burst into laughter, so little were they impressed by the serious character of the speech.

L. G. said that Gladstone's speech on religious liberty was his best.

23RD.—Arranged to play golf with Winston. Found him in the club-house at Walton Heath deeply immersed in the trial of Charles I in the *State Trials*. Dug him out after some labour. The Home Secretary [McKenna] joined us and we had a pleasant round. At tea Winston again produced his book. He said, "The King did not make a bad fight. The proceedings were very different from those in the French Revolution." I said, "The French king and queen were hustled to death. Our proceedings took the form of a regular trial."

WINSTON: Yes, but the King had all the law on his side and the people all the merits on theirs. They did quite right to behead him. It was the only way.

We talked of Stafford House. Winston and the Home Secretary strongly in favour of the scheme.

L. G. told me last night that the condition of affairs on the Continent is still most serious and that Grey is having an anxious time. Winston said the same thing.

24TH.—L. G. was beating the war-drum on Saturday and again to-day. I mean the real war-drum—serious position on the Continent, etc.. In the evening went with L. G. and his wife to see Sir Herbert Tree's new piece at His Majesty's,<sup>1</sup> the first night. He had sent L. G. a box. A poor piece. Tree is a social reformer in his way and this is a social reform play. L. G. expressed great concern at the probable failure of the play. He thought the attempt to preach social reform through

<sup>1</sup> *The Happy Island*, by James Bernard Fagan, from the Hungarian of Melchior Lengyel.

such a medium a mistake. I said, "Tree sympathises with the working classes. Like many men who have been hard-up more or less all their lives, he feels that something is wrong in the structure of the State. Men of this type hate the commercial spirit."

L. G.: Quite true—a shrewd observation.

When we returned to Downing Street, L. G. asked Mrs. L. G. to telephone to the Carlton Hotel to let Tree know that we could not go to supper. The Carlton Club came on the wire, whereupon L. G. remarked, "Now, my dear, be careful. Don't say I am sorry I cannot join *them*, because I am not!" [The Carlton Club is a Conservative stronghold.]

28TH.—Dined with Ellis Griffith. McKenna and his wife were there. McK. told me a good story of Labouchere.<sup>1</sup> When he was on his death-bed there was a small lamp in the room, used for heating food. The nurse upset the bowl of the lamp, which caused the spirit to flare up, whereupon Labby, who was lying with his eyes shut, opened them and said, "Flames! What, so soon?"

30TH (SUNDAY).—Lunched with Mr. and Mrs. L. G. at their new house at Walton. Mr. and Mrs. Masterman, my wife and Megan also there. An amusing experience, there being no furniture in the house. The lunch was spread on rugs in one of the rooms, and we all sat round on planks laid on the builders' steps or on small barrels which had contained building materials. L. G. carved and was full of merriment.

Later had tea with Winston, Mrs. Winston, McKenna, Masterman, Freddie Guest,<sup>2</sup> Geoffrey Howard<sup>3</sup> and my wife.

Talked with Masterman regarding the row in the House of Commons on Wednesday, which prevented Winston from delivering his Navy speech at the appointed hour. I said, "Was Winston angry at the interjections you made? They rather provoked the row." "No," said Masterman, "how could he be? It was he who instigated me to say what I did."

31ST.—In the evening an interesting party at my house.

<sup>1</sup> The Rt. Hon. Henry Labouchere, Editor of *Truth*; d. 1912.

<sup>2</sup> Now the Rt. Hon. F. E. Guest, M.P.; Treasurer of H.M.'s Household, 1912-15.

<sup>3</sup> The Hon. Geoffrey Howard, M.P. for Westbury Division, 1911-18.

L. G., Rufus Isaacs, Masterman, Nicoll and self. L. G. came rather late. Two courses had passed when he arrived. He said at first that he would take up his dinner at that point. Then the servant placed a plate of soup on the table before him, whereupon he remarked, "Being that it is here already, I may as well take it," and repeated with much gusto a story of a Welsh M.P. who was advised by his doctor to abstain from alcohol. When he went out to dinner he would always decline champagne, but when he actually saw the bottle he would exclaim, "Well now, being that it is here already, I may as well take it."

## Chapter XVI

*L. G. rehearses his Budget speech—The Empire's youngest Premier—The National Service controversy—Winston's future—Campbell-Bannerman's policy in Africa—A memorable speech.*

APRIL 1ST, 1913.—Long talk with Illingworth. He said that the past few months have been an anxious time. The Prime Minister has been very worried about the Marconi affair. He took—for him—the unusual course of writing a letter to Illingworth on Sunday and forwarding it by special messenger.

L. G., Illingworth, Masterman and I had lunch together. We talked of Field-Marshal Wolseley's death<sup>1</sup> and the crowd at the funeral. This led to a discussion on the size of newspaper obituaries. I said, laughing, "You [pointing to L. G.] and Winston will not be disappointed in that respect"—a remark greeted with much laughter.

2ND.—Lunched with the McKennas at their house in Smith Square. Sir Robert Chalmers<sup>2</sup> was there also. McKenna seemed pleased at the result of the Marconi case.

4TH.—Masterman told me that L. G. had received a letter from Northcliffe saying that in view of the condition of Continental affairs, he hoped that he and L. G. might be able to work together for the good of England.

To-day L. G. seemed worn out. He said he was dull as ditchwater and that his brain was tired out.

5TH.—Spent the day with L. G., Rufus, Masterman, Illingworth and T. P. O'Connor. Much talk but nothing special.

12TH.—Golfed with L. G., Rufus Isaacs, Illingworth and Masterman. Rufus looked tired. His hair, which was raven black, is showing tinges of white. I asked him which of his law cases had impressed him most. He thought a minute and then said, "The defence of Sir Edward Russell, Editor of the

<sup>1</sup> On March 26th, 1913.

<sup>2</sup> Now Lord Chalmers.



*Liverpool Post*, on a charge of criminal libel. Serious public issues were involved, in addition to which my client was a fine, striking personality." Rufus said that in his early days he conceived the idea of becoming a professional singer. He gave an amusing account of his singing lessons. He added, laughing, "I might have become an operatic star."

We talked of Sabbath observance. L. G. said, "It is hard that I cannot play golf on Sunday, but I shall walk round to-morrow (Sunday) and look at other people playing." He added, "Yesterday Fletcher Moulton told me that the Sabbatarian idea is due to the fact that they [he did not say who]—I suppose he referred to the translators of the Bible—were bad Latin or Greek scholars [I forget which]."

L. G. is very pleased with his new house at Walton.

We discussed the theft of foreign bonds from the Bank of England. Rufus and I explained that bonds of this sort can pass from hand to hand and that the interest is paid by coupons.

Masterman knows very little about City matters. On Friday, when discussing foreign banking with him, I found that he had never heard of the big private banks which transact the foreign bill business.

13TH (SUNDAY).—Lunched with Mr. and Mrs. L. G. Masterman and his wife were there also. My second meal at the new house. We all enjoyed the stories told by L. G.'s brother-in-law, Captain Davis, regarding his travels. He is captain of a large steamer which trades to Australia. We were much amused also by an article in a Welsh paper comparing L. G. with David in Babylon, and by a flowery letter he had received from some Welsh Nonconformist body, couched in real old-fashioned biblical language.

After lunch, L. G. opened the box containing the Budget papers and read a remarkable set of figures showing the progress of taxation and population, which he said he intended to use in his speech. We discussed the effect of a general rise in wages of 5s. per week per worker. I said, "The difficulty is that increases in wages are usually followed by increased prices." I suggested that, to equalise things, in the end the State would probably impose still heavier death duties. L. G.

said, "That is Carnegie's idea." I asked L. G. what was the most impressive sight he had seen. He thought for some time and then said, "I think the march past Gladstone's body as it lay in Westminster Hall." But he added, "I should like to think more about this." He is much interested in naming his new house. He has two Welsh names in his mind, and this afternoon took a vote on the subject. We all voted for the name proposed by him and against the one favoured by Mrs. L. G., who was, however, supported by Megan.

In the afternoon I had a talk with Winston, who said he was delighted with the outcome of the Marconi affair. He is a loyal, affectionate creature.

In talking of university men in business and the recent discussion on the subject, Winston said, "There is no fool like a learned fool." I asked him what was the most impressive sight he had ever seen. He said, "Without a doubt, the advance of the Dervishes at the Battle of Omdurman." He described the scene most graphically—the Arabs advancing in "the dome of the dawn." "But," he added, "the entry of the troops into Ladysmith was a great sight. It made me weep and my heart throbbed wildly. The rugged, dirty, begrimed troops looking tanned and hard as steel, and the defenders with trim uniforms and wan pale faces. It all meant so much."

Winston yesterday took possession of the Admiralty House. I asked Mrs. Winston, "How does Diana (aged four) like the change?"

Mrs. W.: When Diana saw the house, which is large and spacious, she was not at all perturbed. She said, "It is not as big as Blenheim."

W. strongly advised me to read a book called *Twenty-one Years in India*, from which he quoted several passages with much dramatic effect. He said he thought that if he had been trained as a soldier he might have been a success. He added, "I feel I have it in me. I can visualise great movements and combinations."

R.: The power of visualising a thing to be created is rare. Very few architects possess it.

WINSTON: Some people have this vision in regard to

money-making. They can visualise the result of their schemes. They can see into the future.

R.: Yes, the gift of commercial prophecy.

17TH.—Spent the afternoon playing golf with W. A. Watt, Premier of Victoria, and Baillieu, Minister of Public Works, I think. Watt is said to be the youngest prime minister in the Empire—he is only 41. He told a number of good stories, but some were antique. He described golf as “the best game yet invented for the man who works above his eyebrows”—not a bad phrase—and said he enjoys politics. He added, “There is great delight in carrying some measure you regard as beneficial in the face of fierce opposition. The manoeuvres and the fight make it better than any other sport.”

He is a keen-witted man and, they tell me, an able debater.

18TH.—Dined with Mr. McBeath, an Australian merchant. A party of twenty to meet Watt. I sat next to a leading Australian accountant, who told me that Australian agricultural stations are now frequently on a large and sumptuous scale, the house costing as much as £20,000—very different from the accommodation in the old days.

19TH.—L. G. repeated a story of Bonar Law's. B. L. said he was talking to Arthur Balfour of his difficulties, whereupon A. J. B. remarked, “I know, out of one hole and into another. I can sympathise with you.”

We talked of Lord Midleton [St. John Brodrick].<sup>1</sup>

L. G.: He is a good speaker from a departmental point of view. He can always put up a good defence for his department if you give him time.

The national service question is evidently becoming acute. L. G. has stated more than once that he rather favours some form of compulsory service. Masterman said to-day that if the Government supported the scheme, the result would be to split the Liberal Party. He is a strong opponent. *The Nation* has a violent article denouncing Seely. Winston told me of it to-day. He seemed very angry. He said, “I think I shall write in reply, pointing out that Massingham (the editor) has fallen foul of almost every member of the Government. The Prime Minister, who has accomplished practically

<sup>1</sup> Secretary for War, 1900-3; for India, 1903-5.

all he set out to do ; Edward Grey, who has prevented a European conflagration ; the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has done more for the working classes than any other statesman ; the First Lord of the Admiralty, who has tried, however inefficiently, to do his duty, and now, Seely, who is endeavouring in a courageous, able manner to deal with a most difficult situation."

20TH.—Mr. and Mrs. L. G. to lunch, also Masterman. L. G. said he had been busy dictating his Budget speech. "I have got some good stuff," he remarked. Masterman said he thought the speech would be a great one—argumentative and full of startling facts and figures, a speech which would appeal to the commercial classes.

From big to little things. L. G. said, "You might let me have some turf off your fields for my garden. It is a pity to waste it." I said, "Certainly, with much pleasure," but was secretly amused at the contrast. L. G. told us that he still writes every day to his old uncle.

MASTERMAN: That is your only virtue, but I admit it is a real virtue.

L. G. laughed and retorted, "I am glad you admit I have one."

A motor-car being necessary to take his shorthand writer with the Budget papers to London, there was some discussion as to the cost. I said, "The man will do the job for a sovereign." Whereupon L. G. remarked, "Well, I think the Treasury can run to a sovereign to carry the Budget."

We discussed women's suffrage.

L. G.: I am still strongly in their favour notwithstanding all their silly pranks. I think I am the only member of the Cabinet who remains firm.

26TH.—Spent the day with L. G., McKenna, Rufus Isaacs, Masterman and McKenna's brother. We talked of the movement for national service. L. G. said that Prince Louis of Battenberg's<sup>1</sup> public statement last Monday to the effect that our present system of national defence was inadequate and that the Navy must be supplemented was improper. If a public servant desired to make such speeches

<sup>1</sup> First Sea Lord, 1912-14; later Marquess of Milford Haven; d. 1921.

he should resign his position, particularly when the matter discussed was under consideration by the Committee of National Defence.

MASTERMAN: Winston is strong on national defence. He was dining with Illingworth the other night. Illingworth said he talked of nothing else.

L. G. related with much gusto an incident at the Defence Committee. A red-faced burly general who had sat for (I think he said) five days listening to the discussion, at last spoke out. "I don't believe in the superiority of these Germans. They cannot adapt themselves to unaccustomed conditions. For example, when faced with English harness in the East they did not know, and could not discover, how to use it." L. G. said this statement was most dramatic and carried great weight. I think the name of the general is Grierson.<sup>1</sup> L. G. said, further, that French usually refers to General Henderson,<sup>2</sup> and Henderson to Grierson. L. G. spoke highly of French, whom he described as a man of great common sense. It is evident that Winston's scheme is not in favour with his colleagues (except Seely perhaps). We talked of political life. McKenna said, "I don't know why we all go on with it, considering its worries and terribly hard work." I said, "Apart from power and a desire to get done things in which you are interested, you are enthused and stimulated by being in the public eye, and it is your sport."

L. G.: There is no sport which provides so few successes and so many heart-rending failures.

RURUS: I think I could give up public life more readily than any of you.

I said, "That is easily understood. If you left public life you would at once resume your former place at the Bar and become the idol of solicitors and litigants." He replied, "Well, I hope so."

<sup>1</sup> Lieut.-General Sir James Moncrieff Grierson, who had been military attaché in Berlin and attached to the German forces in China during the Boxer Rising, was General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command, from 1912-14. On the outbreak of war in 1914, he was appointed to command the Second Army Corps, but died the day after his arrival in France.

<sup>2</sup> Later Lieut.-General Sir David Henderson, Director of Military Training, 1912; Director-General of Military Aeronautics, 1913-14; d. 1921.

We spoke of the Budget speech.

L. G.: I took particular care regarding my prognostications about the continuance of good trade. I made enquiries through a bank which has branches all over the country, and arranged for the local managers to collect information from leading business men in their respective districts. I also asked Sir Llewellyn Smith, of the Board of Trade, to supply me with a special report—not the ordinary office report—but a carefully prepared statement.

McKENNA: I read that, but it seemed to me rather non-committal.

L. G.: It was quite clear as to the prospects for 1914. After that Llewellyn Smith declined to commit himself, and I think he was quite right.

[McKenna is evidently very industrious. He is well read in all current reports, I notice.]

We talked of the political situation. They all agreed that good trade is the chief factor in elections.

L. G.: I think we should go to the country while trade remains good.

MASTERMAN: But we ought to get our Bills through first.

L. G.: We can see to them later.

RIDDELL: How about plural voting? I suppose the Lords will reject it?

L. G.: Yes; it cannot become law for two years, but we should have to risk that.

MASTERMAN: A redistribution scheme would be very helpful.

To this they all agreed.

McKENNA: I should not mind going out, but I hate to see them come in. They have no measures and no men.

L. G.: I don't agree. They could form a strong Cabinet. Apart from the old gang, they have F. E. Smith, Lord Robert Cecil,<sup>1</sup> Lord Hugh Cecil, Harry Lawson,<sup>2</sup> and several more competent men. Make no mistake. They could form quite a strong Cabinet.

During the day McKenna was several times on the tele-

<sup>1</sup> Now Viscount Cecil.

<sup>2</sup> Later Viscount Burnham; d. 1933.

phone regarding the Suffragettes. L. G. said to him, "You are quite right. There are only two ways of dealing with them. My way—give them the vote—or firm administration of the law."

We talked of ages.

L. G.: 1863 is the great vintage year of the Cabinet. Look up their ages and you will find I am correct.

27TH.—Lunched with L. G. at his house at Walton. L. G., one of his sons, and Megan. Spent the afternoon with him alone. Much talk about Winston's future. L. G. said he thought W. would remain with the Liberals, although they would not adopt his national defence scheme.

R.: Except under strong pressure he would not like to leave you. He is fond of you.

L. G.: Yes, I believe he is and I am fond of him. He is an extraordinary fellow. Very, very clever.

R.: He would be a splendid man to have beside you in a great ordeal. He would stand loyally by you, shoulder to shoulder.

We talked of Cecil Rhodes.

L. G.: Labouchere, who was a greedy man, always alleged that Rhodes planned the Jameson Raid for money-making purposes. I did not and do not believe that for a moment. Rhodes had gone beyond money. He wanted power for himself and England. But Labby would never believe it. He was always harping on the value of shares.

R.: The South African constitution was the biggest thing established in our day. Who was responsible? Campbell-Bannerman or Asquith?

L. G.: Oh, C. B.! He deserves all the credit. It was all done in a ten minutes' speech at the Cabinet—the most dramatic, the most important ten minutes' speech ever delivered in our time. In ten minutes he brushed aside all the checks and safeguards devised by Asquith, Winston and Loreburn. At the outset only two of us were with him, John Burns and myself. But his speech convinced the whole Cabinet. It was the utterance of a plain, kindly, simple man. The speech moved one at least of the Cabinet to tears. It was the most impressive thing I ever saw. The result of C. B.'s

*April 1913]*

MORE PAGES FROM MY DIARY

policy has been remarkable. It captured Gen. Botha by its magnanimity, just as all great men are impressed when you display your confidence in them. If we had a war to-morrow, Botha and 50,000 Boers would march with us side by side. He would, if necessary, drive the Germans out of South Africa. It is a remarkable fact that C. B. should ever have become Premier. At one time, Harcourt, Morley, Rosebery and Asquith were all competing with him, and of course they were all men of more intellectual power than he was. In addition, he had no power of speech. But in the end he triumphed through sheer force of character—the triumph of a plain, simple mind.

We discussed the Budget.

L. G.: They say I am rash and optimistic. They will find I am quite right. They have not taken into account the death duties on many large estates which have yet to make their contributions. This will bring me home, apart from other sources of revenue.



## Chapter XVII

*A visit to Arthur Pearson—How the Cabinet does its work—The Prince of Wales and the blue-faced monkey—To Criccieth with L. G.—A palmist's remarkable prophecy—L. G. on his Boer War adventure in Birmingham.*

MAY 1ST, 1913.—Spent the day with Northcliffe at Walton Heath. He said, "The Conservative Party is a party of little men with no policy. I tell them so and it makes them angry."

Referring to the Marconi affair, he said, "Winston telephoned to me for an interview. He told me the story and was much agitated. I did not know until then that he was so much attached to Lloyd George." Northcliffe was very critical of L. G.. He said he lacks a sense of the fitness of things and gave instances. I said I thought some of these rather trivial. N. laughed and retorted, "Straws show the way the wind blows."

3RD.—Spent the day with the McKennas, Rufus Isaacs and Masterman. Isaacs said that in a revenue case heard by the House of Lords this week, Moulton and Shaw had expressed an opinion which, if correct, would invalidate the four million valuations under the Finance Act. Masterman agreed and said it was serious. M. spoke in high terms of McKenna. He said he is a capable man with an off-hand manner. He described him as a loyal and generous colleague. When McKenna was appointed to the Home Office, M. was Assistant Secretary. McKenna always endeavoured to give him his fair share of the work and limelight, which is more than can be said of many heads of departments.

4TH (SUNDAY).—Bonar Law told me that the Opposition intend to raise the Marconi question in the House of Commons. He said, "I am sorry for Rufus Isaacs and L. G.. There was no corruption, but they acted imprudently. That is the line we shall take."

5TH.—Long chat with Northcliffe about newspapers. He said he had been thinking of a remark of mine when I last saw him as to the importance of tradition in a newspaper office and the difficulty of changing it. He added, "I am sure you are quite right."

We talked of the method of dealing with people. N. said, "As I grow older I see that while strength of character is very important for success in life, tact is equally important."

7TH.—Called on Arthur Pearson. He is quite blind—a sad sight. Asked me to join him in his periodical business. We may come to terms. He said that the circulation of the morning *Standard*, which he purchased, went down as old readers died off. Inclement weather killed them in shoals and thus brought about an immediate drop in sales. That was why he was compelled to stop publication. When he changed the size of the *Evening Standard* and amalgamated it with the *St. James's Gazette* he received a letter from Lord Knollys asking him to call. Lord K. said the King (Edward) did not like the change and begged him not to alter his old friend and companion the *St. James's Gazette*. Pearson replied he was sorry his plans could not be changed, and asked the King to read the new paper for six weeks and then let him know his views. Six weeks later to the day Pearson had a letter from Knollys saying the King had changed his opinion and was now satisfied that the right policy had been pursued. Pearson said the *Daily Express* had broken his health. He spoke cheerfully of the future, but is evidently convinced that he will never be any better.

10TH.—Lunched with L. G. and Illingworth. L. G. said it was a great mistake to construct three Dreadnoughts for oil consumption without first making sure that the oil could be procured. The Government was in an awkward situation. Fisher was mainly responsible. It was his idea. Winston should not have acted on Fisher's advice. L. G. added, "Winston is a remarkable man. On Thursday I received an urgent telephone message from him asking me to see him at once. He came, and wanted me to sanction £50,000 for an airship shed. I said, 'I cannot act hurriedly. I must look into the matter.' He was disappointed."

R.: He is very keen on his job and frets about what he regards as unnecessary delays.

L. G.: Yes, but he must recognise that one has other pressing things to deal with.

11TH.—Motored to Seaford and spent the day with Colonel and Mrs. Seely—a charming woman. He told me that when he went to the War Office he knew he would have a tough job. He had heard that 100,000 men were about to leave the Territorials. He said to the permanent officials, "Now, tell me the truth." They said, "Trade is good. You will have a shortage in recruiting of 35,000 per annum." This estimate has proved quite correct, but he thinks he will pull through.

We talked of Bonar Law.

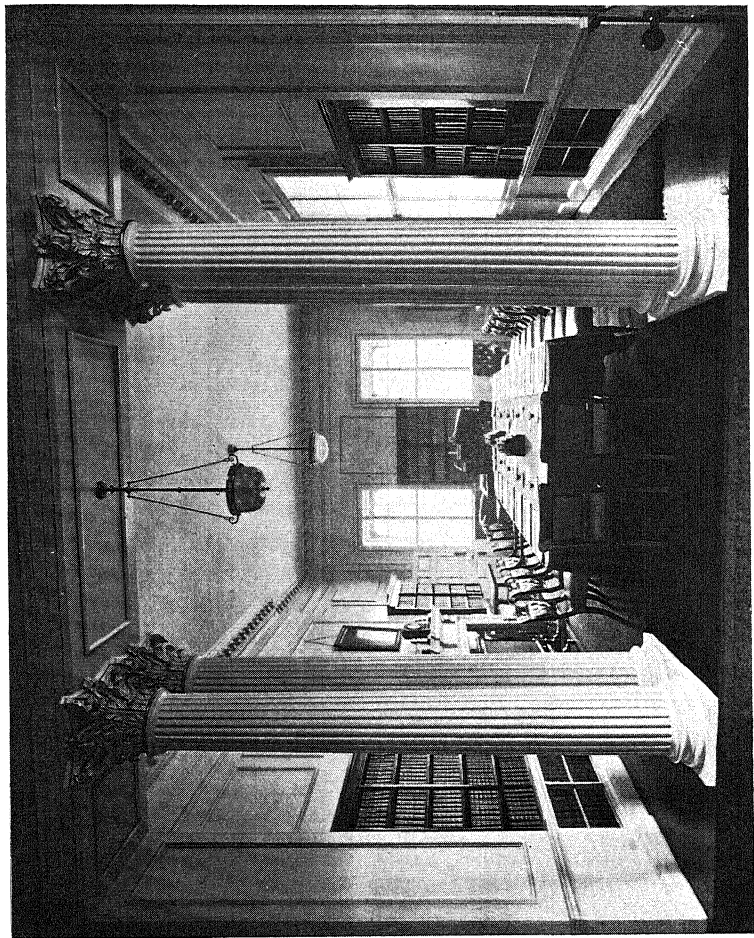
SEELY: He is a nice man. I like him, but he lacks imagination. I cannot imagine him as a successful Premier.

R.: The public usually regard you as a patrician and Tory at heart.

SEELY (laughing): Quite true, but as you know, I am a Radical. I am all for freedom. My grandfather financed the Chartists and introduced a minimum wage of 17s. per week for agricultural labour on his estate in the Isle of Wight. At Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1887 the old gentleman was selected to deliver an address to the Queen on behalf of the inhabitants of the Island. She said to him, "Mr. Seely, you have not always spoken in the same way." (He had been a strong Republican.) "No," he replied, "both you and I, your Majesty, have learned to hold different views from those we formerly held."

A sensation has been caused by the disappearance of the Prime Minister's flowing locks, which gave him a distinguished air. Rumour has been asking why. Seely says the P.M.'s hair was cut by a strange barber who gave Mr. A. a close crop while he was busy reading a book. We talked of Grey.

SEELY: He has done far more than the public knows. He has had to steer round some awful corners. His position is unique in diplomacy. The Ambassadors have learned to ask for his help and guidance. They trust him implicitly. The



CABINET ROOM AT DOWNING STREET.



triumph of a plain, simple nature, and telling the truth instead of relying on diplomatic evasions.

### THE WAY THE CABINET DOES ITS WORK

The work of the Cabinet is mainly done by Committees, to which different matters are referred. These Committees report to the Cabinet as a whole. A great deal of the time of Cabinet Ministers is occupied in attending Committees. Some Committees are permanent and others temporary.

L. G. made an amusing remark the other day. I told him that a mutual friend had said he was no longer nervous when about to speak in public. L. G. remarked, "No, I suppose it will now be the audience who will be nervous!"

16TH.—Dined with L. G. at his house at Walton. Mr. and Mrs. Masterman, Seebohm Rowntree, E. R. Cross, a relative of Rowntree's, and two other members of the Committee investigating the Land Question were there. I told two new stories.

1. Heard this from Walter Gordon Lennox about Lord Kinnoull's little daughter. She was taken to see King Edward's funeral. At night her mother called to see her when she was in bed and asked, "Have you said your prayers?" "No," said the little girl. "Why not?" asked the mother. "I don't mean to say them to-night," was the reply. "Why not?" again asked the mother. "Well, because it won't be any use, as God will be too busy unpacking King Edward," replied the little girl.

2. Colonel Seely's little daughter was taken by her grandmother, Lady Crichton, to an exhibition of pictures. The child was placed on a settee in the middle of the Gallery while the grandmother went to look at the pictures. Very soon she heard the child crying. Lady Crichton went to her and asked what was the matter. "Boo-hoo," cried the little girl. "The pictures won't begin to move!" The child thought she had been taken to a cinematograph show and that the machinery would not work.

L. G. then told a story about a little girl who was busy drawing. "What are you drawing?" she was asked. "I am drawing God," was the answer. "But nobody knows what

God is like," said her mother. "No," said the little girl, "but they will when I have done."

Illingworth arrived late. Much talk of the Newmarket election. L. G. invited me to join a sweepstake. We all wrote our figures on pieces of paper. L. G., Conservative majority 380; Illingworth, Liberal majority 128; Cross, 50 Liberal; Riddell, 50 Liberal; Mrs. Masterman, 50 Liberal. Illingworth very confident of success.

L. G. told me an amusing story about the late Assheton-Smith,<sup>1</sup> the North Wales landowner. When the Prince of Wales (now the King) visited Assheton-Smith, he said, "You have been very kind and have done a great deal of public work. I should like my father to confer an honour upon you." Assheton-Smith replied, "You are very good, but I should prefer to die plain Mr. Assheton-Smith."

THE PRINCE OF WALES: Well, is there anything else you would like?

ASSHETON-SMITH: You know that I am very fond of animals for my collection. I have not got a blue-faced monkey. They are difficult to get from India.

The Prince of Wales said, "I will see what can be done."

L. G.: And he got his blue-faced monkey—his only want! (L. G. much amused with this story, which he has related more than once.)

17TH.—Golfed with L. G., Illingworth and Masterman. Going to the 7th hole, L. G. said to me, "I am very apprehensive about Newmarket. I think we shall have a severe defeat." At the 11th hole, a messenger arrived with a telegram containing the result—a win for the Conservatives by a large majority. This rather threw a gloom over the party, particularly Illingworth and Masterman. Lunched at L. G.'s house; with him Seebohm Rowntree, Cross, and two more members of the Land Enquiry Commission.

We lunched on the verandah—a beautiful day.

20TH.—L. G. and I motored to Criccieth. We started early. I met him at Aylesbury, where we had breakfast. As we approached the Welsh hills he raised his hat to them and said, "What do you think of them?" I expressed my admira-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. George W. Duff Assheton-Smith, of Vaynol Park, Bangor; d. 1904.

tion. He said, "I am glad to be the means of showing my dear hills to you for the first time." He had made elaborate plans that this should be a surprise visit for Mrs. L. G., but she had got wind of it and was awaiting us. Soon L. G.'s old uncle, Mr. Lloyd, arrived. L. G. greeted him most affectionately with a cordial embrace, which seemed to give the old gentleman much pleasure. After tea we (L. G. and I) went for a long walk through some beautiful plantations. We talked of oratory.

L. G.: The chief thing is the choice of the right idea. The idea that will influence the audience at the moment—the selection of the right idea amongst all the ideas available. Oratory is like generalship. There are two classes of generals. There is the one class which makes elaborate plans but never wins a battle, and the other which picks out the right plan and generally succeeds.

R.: Collateral statements are often the most efficacious. Argument seldom convinces. It may interest and it may look clever, but it rarely accomplishes the purpose of persuading people to do what you want them to do.

L. G.: I quite agree with that. It is often the irrelevant things that persuade. The gift of tactful irrelevance is the greatest of all Parliamentary gifts. Some of the old Welsh preachers were great orators. Have I told you of Justice and Mercy? Old John Jones made a splendid sermon on that subject. He said Justice and Mercy are both near the Throne, but they are different. When the Lord determined to destroy mankind by the flood, he called in Justice to do the work, but Mercy was there too, and Mercy went to Noah and said, "Build an ark for yourself and your family and save the world." Then again when the iniquities of Sodom and Gomorrah had called down the wrath of the Almighty, when he had ordered Justice to exterminate the inhabitants, Mercy came along just as Justice was taking his breath and said, "There is one little family here in whom I am interested. Let me save them."

[L. G. told this in great detail and much better than I have set it down, standing at times in the road and declaiming the story.]

21ST.—L. G. handed me letters from Masterman and



Harold Spender, who have been speaking at the Altrincham by-election. They are both uneasy about the position of the Liberal Party, and press L. G. to launch his Land Campaign without delay. He proposes to start in September. He says he has a good programme.

Yesterday we had an interesting chat regarding the great Liberal families like the Illingworths, the Shuttleworths and the Buxtons. L. G. said, "The greatest credit is due to them. They are always on the side of the people, often when it is greatly to their interest to go the other way. Percy Illingworth, for example, is a sure barometer of Liberalism. He is like those papers chemists use to test various substances. If you put any proposition to Percy he is sure to give you the right answer from the Liberal point of view."

Wet and stormy. The sea rather rough. We walked along the shore and sat for some time on the rocks watching the waves. L. G. gave me an insight into a curious side of his character. He showed me a letter he had received from a palmist and soothsayer, who stated, among other things, that L. G. was beset by many dangers, but would be protected by unseen spirits until he had accomplished a great mission he was destined to perform. L. G. said, "That is a remarkable statement, because I am myself convinced that nothing will be allowed to happen to me until I have accomplished some great work for which I have been singled out. I feel that I shall be quite secure until then." I said, "But what is to happen afterwards?" "Ah," he replied, "afterwards! Well, afterwards I suppose I shall share the fate of all other men who have been selected to perform great works. I shall be left to my fate. I shall be deserted." I said, "Has this been the fate of other great leaders?" "Yes," he replied, "I think it has. Gladstone, Chamberlain." I said, "How about Disraeli?" "Well," replied L. G. "he died an unhappy man." It is quite certain that L. G. thinks he is the subject of special protection by Providence, and that he is destined to perform some great service to humanity. This is what helps to give him confidence. Masterman told me some time ago that L. G. has this belief, but I did not take the statement seriously. I now find it to be true.

A long talk about religion in Wales.

L. G.: The Welsh love oratory. There is no country in which oratory is so popular as an amusement. They are like the ancient Greeks. They—I mean the common people—understand the art.

R.: I thought they loved preaching because they are such a religious race.

L. G.: Oh no, not entirely. To listen to fine preaching and to criticise the preacher is their form of recreation.

This evening we took a long walk and visited Llanystumdwy, his native village. We inspected the house where he lived when a boy and the institute he presented to the village. I said, "I wonder how you would like to live again in a cottage."

L. G.: I often wonder too.

24TH AND 25TH (CRICCIETH).—L. G. busy preparing a speech. Sent several telegrams to London for information and received voluminous replies. Three of the Welsh insurance people arrived—able men. L. G. had a long conference with them. He dictated his speech in English to the reporters so that it might be dispatched by wire. I had a long talk with the shorthand writer, who has acted in that capacity for the Chancellor of the Exchequer during the past twenty years. He told me that Goschen took an enormous amount of trouble and spent an enormous amount of time in preparing a Budget speech. Harcourt's Budget speeches were largely prepared by his son. Ritchie's speeches were largely compounded by his secretary. Asquith wrote his Budget speeches in pencil and then dictated them.

L. G. spoke to-day in a small chapel. He spoke mostly in Welsh but occasionally in English—eloquent and impressive. We were to leave at 6 on the following morning, so he said "Good night" to his uncle at the chapel door. The old man was evidently anxious to say good-bye again and came walking after us up the hill.

L. G. told me that he (L. G.) was suffering from a severe pain in the leg—some nervous trouble he believed, which frequently attacked him when he had to undergo severe mental and physical strain, such as speaking at a public meeting.

He said, "I have had it since I was a boy. I suppose it will carry me off one day. It is a curious ailment."

26TH.—Started for London at 6 o'clock—a lovely ride. As we drove through Birmingham I asked L. G. whether his famous Birmingham speech episode during the Boer War was not very exciting. He said, "Not so exciting as you would think. One settles down into a dull, dogged frame of mind."

He told me that he spent the previous night with a friend named Evans, who lived in a suburb of Birmingham. He continued, "I drove to the hall with a little girl on my knee, and a dear little thing she was. That was Mrs. Evans's idea. I was not observed, and got into the hall all right. I went to a small room at the back of the hall. They came to me and said the hall was full of my opponents who had got in with forged tickets, and that I could not speak. I began dictating my speech to the reporters. I could hear the roar of the crowd in the hall and outside the building. Later I went on the platform. They would not let me speak, so I continued to dictate my speech to the reporters. That made the crowd angry and they stormed the platform. There were then no police in the hall. I retired again to the small room. The crowd tried to reach me, and the police, who had arrived by this time, fought them in the narrow passage. The crowd broke in one door. Only one window in the building was not broken, and that was the window of the room in which I was. The organiser of the riot had selected the window sill as the place from which to address the mob. That was why the window was not broken. When the crowd had been beaten back and the hall was empty, I donned a policeman's uniform and walked out. The hall was just a wreck. I walked through thousands of people, none of whom recognised me."

An amusing incident occurred on our journey to London. We had a puncture. The proceedings attracted a small crowd of women and children. One of the ladies was expecting an increase. I said to her, "Here's three-and-sixpence for the baby. A friend of mine gives a mother thirty shillings for a baby." The woman replied, "You mean Lloyd George! We have to pay for what he gives us!" L. G. was standing listen-

ing to the conversation. The woman did not recognise him. I don't think he was pleased by the good lady's remarks.

L. G. has discovered a new Welsh author, a writer of short stories named Williams—a Welsh parson who writes in Welsh. L. G. translated some of the stories to me, and they were excellent. I visited the author at Penmaenmawr, a place about thirty miles from Criccieth, and arranged that he should translate some of his stories into English for publication.

I was to have spoken at Watford on the 24th, so it was necessary to explain my absence. L. G. took great delight in preparing a telegram to the chairman of the meeting in which he stated that he feared I had been lost in the Welsh mists and that he was preparing a search party assisted by Welsh terriers.

My visit to North Wales has been instructive. It is interesting to see how L. G.'s natural genius has been influenced by the poetic imagery used by Welsh preachers and an environment in which oratory is the chief amusement and recreation. The natural similes he uses with such effect are the stock-in-trade of the Welsh pulpit. He has come to his political and social work untrammelled by association with a great commercial community, with its traditional respect for wealth and fear to injure the money-making machine. It is evident that L. G., with his training and temperament, is just the man to make social experiments and advances which others would fear to make. His courage verges on rashness, and his imagination enables him to devise, copy or adapt schemes which would not occur to the ordinary British statesman.

28TH.—Lunched with L. G. at Downing Street. Present: Seely, Attorney-General, Premier of Victoria, Masterman, Ramsay MacDonald.

Much pleasant conversation, but nothing striking.

31ST.—L. G.: You (turning to me) remember our talk about the date for starting my Land Campaign? Five men, all representing different phases of thought, have pressed me to begin it at once.

R.: Well, why not, if you are ready? But July would be a bad month.

L. G.: That is the trouble. I am not quite ready. There are certain details to be settled.

MASTERMAN: Early in July would do, but you will have to get the Cabinet's approval.

L. G.: I shall not trouble about that. I shall get the Prime Minister's approval, and mention the subject to two or three of the others. I am not going to discuss the matter at the Cabinet. One member at least would not understand it.

M.: It would be wiser to endeavour to carry them all with you.

L. G.: You cannot begin a campaign on those lines.

We had a long chat regarding the administration of the Insurance Act. L. G. asked M. whether he did not think he (M.) should have an assistant. Masterman agreed. Several names were suggested, but none met with approval.

Talked alone with Masterman about the new campaign. He said the proposal was to revise the whole system of land taxation by taxing land instead of buildings and improvements, which would remedy the grievance of rating owners who improve their property. M. said he thought L. G. unwise in not consulting his colleagues before commencing the campaign.

## Chapter XVIII

*Clearing the decks for the Land Campaign—J. L. Garvin's start in London—A Marconi bombshell—How history is made—The Marconi Debate—L. G. attacks his enemies.*

JUNE 1ST, 1913.—Golfed with Seely. We had a short chat with Bonar Law and a friend of his.

I said, laughing, "We are wondering whether it would be consistent with the decencies of political life if you were to play a foursome with us this afternoon."

B. L. smiled and made an excuse. He asked Seely if he really intended to debate with Lord Roberts at the Eighty Club. Seely said that he never had any such intention, only intended to propose Roberts's health. B. L. said he thought a debate would have been a mistake.

Seely said, "I wish you could show me how to increase territorial recruiting."

I suggested that he would have to abolish the Unit System, which in some cases prevents him from taking recruits when they are obtainable.<sup>1</sup> He agreed.

3RD.—Called at Downing Street. Found the Trooping of the Colour in full swing. L. G. took me to his bedroom, where we had a good view.

Later we had a long talk regarding the Land Campaign. He said he had not yet finally determined on his plans. He asked me for my ideas. I strongly commented upon the inequalities of the present rating system, which penalises improvements but takes no adequate account of capital values. He agreed.

Attended L. G.'s official dinner at the Treasury.

4TH.—Dined with Robertson Nicoll and Garvin.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Unit System (Territorial Reserve Forces Act, 1907) gave Territorial recruits the right to select their own corps, and laid it down that they could not be transferred, in peace time, without their consent.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. J. L. Garvin, who has edited the *Observer* since 1908, also edited the *Pall Mall Gazette* from 1912-15.

G. said that when he was on the *Newcastle Chronicle* (Cowen's paper) he had £300 per annum and was very happy. He lived in a small house on a moor for which he paid £26 a year rent. Cowen allowed him great licence, and he went for everything and everybody. Then he felt that he must go in for constructive work. He came to London and took a position on the *Daily Telegraph*. He first attracted notice in the *Fortnightly Review*. His first article was sent on chance, accompanied by a letter in which he said, "Please accept the article or reject it. I cannot alter it. I have boiled it down and taken out every bit of fat and every superfluous word." The editor accepted the article, and G. became a regular contributor. He said that when Arthur Balfour wrote his final manifesto, he (Garvin) and Sanders, Balfour's secretary, were waiting for the copy at Carlton House Gardens. It came down slip by slip from Balfour's bedroom with long pauses between the slips. At last the supply stopped. Sanders said, "We must send it out. You had better write the peroration." This Garvin did and Sanders took it upstairs. Balfour sent for Garvin, who found him in his pyjamas looking thin and ill. Balfour said, "I am much obliged to you for writing the conclusion, but I have now managed to write one myself, and, while I like yours, I like my own better."

7TH AND 8TH.—This has been an amazing week. On Thursday came the bombshell that Alec Murray (now in Bogota, South America) had been investing in American Marconis, both on his own account and on account of "a trust"—no doubt the party funds, but we shall hear more later. The disclosure was made owing to the failure and absconding of a stockbroker. No one in the Cabinet knew of these dealings, which have caused dire dismay in the Liberal Party. L. G. and Rufus were astounded. I met Illingworth at dinner on Thursday—the day of the disclosure. He said, "Have you heard the news?" I said, "I have not yet read the account of to-day's proceedings." "Well," said he, "you will have something interesting to read. It is a nice mess." Illingworth seemed much disturbed.

On Saturday and Sunday I spent several hours with L. G., who was evidently very depressed.

L. G.: I knew nothing of this. Murray never said a word. He believed in the American Marconi as an investment. No doubt he thought he was doing well to invest the party funds in that way, if he did so.

On Friday I met Donald, who told me that he intended to go for the Government.

L. G.: Illingworth is not crafty enough for a Whip. He is a fine English gentleman, but does not quite know the game. For example, the other night I saw that the Tories were civil and business-like, not at all what you would expect from the winners of an important by-election. Evidently they were anxious to get to the division. I smelt danger and spoke to the Whips, but they pooh-poohed the whole thing. When it came to the division, it appeared that the Opposition had scraped up every possible voter and we were placed in an awkward position. Our people are fools to be such cowards. They have the position in their own hands. We have an ample majority. Three months often makes an enormous change in the situation. Only a few months ago, when I met Bonar Law and Max Aitken on the Continent, the latter said to me, "Our people (the Tories) will not come in for twenty years. Poor old Bonar has a hard task before him." Now see how the position has changed, and it may change again just as speedily.

9TH.—The murder is out. It now appears that £9,000 of the party funds was invested by Murray in American Marconis, and that apparently the broker has lost or misappropriated £30,000 entrusted to him by Murray as Chief Whip. Illingworth has known these facts for some little time. The disclosure has caused a great sensation.

### HOW HISTORY IS MADE

13TH.—The day before yesterday the Prime Minister made a great speech in the House of Commons on direct and indirect taxation, supposed to have been premeditated and carefully prepared.

### THE FACTS

L. G.: Asquith is a wonderful Parliamentarian. When you hear him speak he makes you forget all about by-elections.



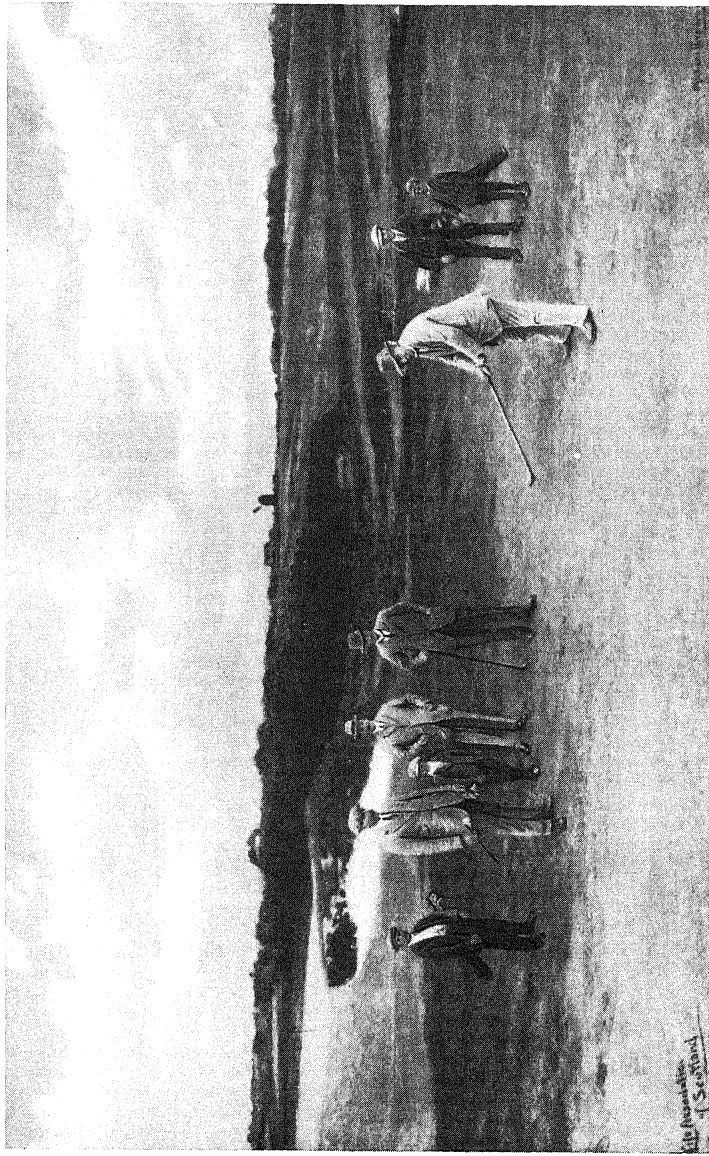
Yesterday he made a remarkable speech. An intellectual feat. He had not intended to speak on the taxation question, but I thought he might speak on the reduction of the National Debt. The old boy takes a great interest in the National Debt. However, I saw him getting angry at something that was said, so I urged him to speak. He grunted, snorted and shook himself as he does when much interested. Then I saw him edging towards the edge of the Bench, ready to get up. Masterman leaned over to me and said, "If the P.M. is going to speak, I have a lot of material here," handing me his notes, which I in turn handed to the P.M.. He took them, snorted vigorously, read them, got up and delivered a slashing speech which everyone thought carefully prepared!

[More is likely to be heard of the speech during the next election. It contains one injudicious phrase which is already being exploited by the P.M.'s opponents<sup>1</sup>.]

L. G. has just won a heat in the Treasury golf handicap and is now in the final. Immensely pleased and full of his doings in the match. Like a boy. Rufus Isaacs told me that when L. G. returned to the House of Commons, they could get him to talk of nothing but his match. The Attorney-General remarked, "Extraordinary! Wonderful!"

14TH.—The Marconi Report is published. It is said that the chairman, Sir Albert Spicer, wrote to Asquith while the enquiry was proceeding, resigning his position on the ground that certain information had first been communicated to Falconer and Booth, members of the Committee, instead of

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Asquith was replying to an amendment to the Finance Bill moved by Mr. (now Viscount) Snowden, which proposed the abolition of all food taxes and the increasing of taxes on unearned incomes and large estates. Mr. A. said he had never committed himself to the policy of the "free breakfast table," and had never seen his way, since he had had to do with these matters as a responsible statesman, "to any rearrangement of our fiscal system which ought not to, and would not of necessity, involve the imposition upon all classes, without any distinction—I am not speaking of those who are below the poverty line—of something in the nature of an adequate proportional contribution to our national expenditure. I do not think there is any doctrine more fatal to the root principle of democratic government," he added, "than that it should consist in the constant amelioration, at great expense to the community, of the social conditions of the less favoured classes in the country at the sole and exclusive expense of other classes."



[From the painting by Michael Braid. Reproduced by permission of the Scottish Life Assurance Co.]

MR. LLOYD GEORGE PLAYING GOLF AT WALTON HEATH WITH MR. W. H. FOWLER,  
JAMES BRAID AND LORD RIDDELL.



to him as chairman. Asquith persuaded him to withdraw his resignation.

Masterman says that if the Report had been unfavourable, Rufus Isaacs would have resigned and L. G. would have followed suit.

Played golf with L. G., Rufus Isaacs and Donald. In the afternoon Rufus and L. G. went to L. G.'s house to prepare their speeches for the Marconi Debate, fixed for Wednesday next. What line L. G. will take, I do not know. Some of his colleagues want him to be conciliatory, and he seems disposed to agree. McKenna, however, is much averse to L. G. putting on the white sheet, and says that however meek and mild he may be, the Opposition will not abate their attack in the country in the smallest degree, but will use his humility as evidence of guilt.

Long talk with L. G., Rufus, Masterman, Donald and Caird. Discussed merits and demerits of Cabinet of business men, and why men of business are usually unsuccessful politicians.

L. G.: People forget that Parliament is a business requiring as much training as any other business. A man expects to begin what is to him a new business at 50 or 55, and to succeed immediately, whereas he would ridicule such an idea in connection with any other business effort. Joe (Chamberlain) was a business man, but he had been in politics all his life. Then again, think how differently Parliamentary and business affairs are conducted. If you were a railway director, how would you like every day to have to meet a body of angry shareholders, whose chief object was to remove you from office? . . .

R.: And to prove that you were an ass!

L. G.: Yes, and a knave!

R.: The business man dominates his little world. That makes him impatient of delays and criticism.

L. G.: W. H. Smith was a curious instance. He did well, but it was amusing to watch him in some great debate, in the course of which floods of eloquence had been poured forth. He used to get up and in a mild tone begin, something like this, "Mr. Speaker. We have had a most interesting debate.

The subject has been fully presented to the House from all points of view. Everything has been said that can be said," etc..

15TH.—Spent the afternoon with the McKennas.

I said to him, "You must often feel very weary."

"Yes," he replied, "I am sick of the whole thing. The worry and anxiety are sometimes almost intolerable. But one has to do one's duty."

We talked of strikes and the use of the military.

I said, "You have managed well. The English people like law and order administered in the accustomed manner unless new developments gradually force them to believe that novel measures are necessary."

McKENNA: During the coal strike I had a great dispute with Haldane, who was then at the War Office. He wanted to use the soldiers. I said, "If you do, I shall resign." He said, "If you don't agree to their being used, I shall resign!" But I had my way.

17TH.—Lunched with the McKennas. Present, Mrs. Belloc Lowndes, the author, Lutyens and Dickinson, secretary of the Lunacy Commission. Amusing talk, but nothing to record.

19TH.—Spent the day with Northcliffe at Sutton Place.

He said, "I hope our friends (L. G. and Rufus) appreciate the action of my papers."

I said, "Yes. They say you acted like a gentleman."

That evidently pleased him. He again referred to Winston's loyalty to L. G. and Rufus.

We talked a good deal about newspaper matters; reporting methods, block-making, type and the like. He takes a keen interest in all these details, and is always ready to take or give hints. We had a talk about temperament.

N.: Are you temperamental?

R. (laughing): That's not for me to say! Are you?

N.: Yes.

Dined with Robertson Nicoll, who asked me to give him a few notes on the Marconi Debate which began to-day. This I promised to do.

20TH.—The Marconi Debate began yesterday, when L. G. and Rufus spoke. Golfed with them this morning,

also with Sir Alfred Mond. Isaacs told me that his speech was a great strain. L. G. very bright. He gave a graphic description of the debate. He said he was more moderate in his attack on the other side than he had intended.

The party are to entertain him and Rufus at a lunch or dinner. Winston is to propose their health.

I said, "I suppose Asquith will make a big speech this afternoon?"

"Yes," said L. G., "and if he goes for the other side, he will get a great reception."

He added, "The P.M. seemed rather surprised to see me dressed for golf. But I told him I would be back in time for the debate."

R.: Of course you must. If you don't, you will be like a man who has been preparing for an operation for six months, and then goes golfing on the day fixed by the surgeons for the event.

This amused him immensely. "Quite true!" he remarked. "It is an operation!"

21ST.—Sir Robert Chalmers is leaving the Treasury to become Governor of Ceylon. Although friendly with L. G., I understand that he is not comfortable at the Treasury. L. G. thinks well of Chalmers, but I suppose L. G.'s methods are not quite those of the ordinary Minister.

26TH.—Talked with L. G. regarding domestic relations.

He said, "I don't think it good for a man to be in his wife's leading strings. There are some men who spend all their spare time with their wives—motor with them, play golf with them, etc.. I think this bad for both parties. It is better for a man to spend a considerable part of his leisure with men. It is essential to cultivate the male point of view."

Played with L. G., Ramsay MacDonald and Donald. Much talk of L. G.'s speech at the luncheon which is to be given to him and Rufus on Tuesday at the National Liberal Club. L. G. very strongly for a violent, *tu quoque* attack on the other side. He said, "I must uncork the bottle. There are many things I feel I must say." Ramsay MacDonald said, "Well, I should keep my finger on the neck of the bottle!"

L. G.: Well, I want to go for those newspapers who are attacking me in the most disgraceful way.

Donald: Newspapers like to be attacked. They live on attacks. I wish Bonar Law would attack the *Daily Chronicle*. It would do us a lot of good.

R.: Sneers and ridicule are, as always, powerful weapons.

L. G.: Quite correct. Strachey has never got over my sneering reference to him.

L. G. is not very well, although I believe that his doctor says there is nothing radically wrong. He showed me letters from Dr. Horton, Silvester Horne and other leading Non-conformists, sympathising with him and indicating that they thought he had been the victim of an unscrupulous conspiracy by the Conservatives.

Masterman told me that when he mentioned L. G.'s name at a big meeting of some 3,000 people at Leicester (by-election) this week, the audience cheered for five minutes on end. All the same, the Liberal majority showed a considerable decline.

Talked with L. G. regarding his forthcoming Land Campaign. He inquired what I thought of the printed memorandum explaining and justifying the scheme.

I said, "Three columns of small type will never be read. You should issue a shilling book, containing an introduction by yourself, and citing, say, thirty or forty striking, well-tested, typical grievances. You should get Robertson Nicoll to publish the book."

L. G. said he would arrange to meet him.

29TH.—Long talk with McKenna.

Called at Downing Street. L. G. was in the Whips' office. Accompanied by Illingworth, he subsequently came to the library in his own house.

We discussed the speech he is to deliver to-morrow at the National Liberal Club. He said, "My friends are trying to muzzle me. I had two of them here last night. I appreciate their kindness."

He finished the conversation by saying, "I shall be more moderate than my friends expect."

Then shielding his mouth with his hand, he turned to me

*June 1913]*

MORE PAGES FROM MY DIARY

and said, laughing, "I shall give my enemies snuff. No man has so many!"

30TH.—To-day he made a slashing attack on the other side. Much comment as to whether he has been wise or unwise. I called to see him in the evening. He was out.

Mrs. L. G. said, "I am glad my husband followed his own ideas to-day. I am glad he went for them."

Both L. G. and his wife are real fighters, always ready for the fray. Yesterday L. G.'s eyes flashed when discussing his speech. This evening when I sat listening to Mrs. L. G., I could imagine her turning up her sleeves and going for her husband's assailants!



## Chapter XIX

*Death of Alfred Lyttelton—Planning the Land Report—A wealthy anarchist—Mr. McKenna recalls a crisis—The use of troops during strikes—King Edward and the Parliament Bill.*

JULY 1ST, 1913.—Northcliffe and I went to the Cannon Street Hotel to start the National Advertising Society. It was a huge meeting. We both made speeches.

5TH.—Alfred Lyttelton died this morning—a good friend of mine, and a most lovable man. He was taken ill at the Foreign Office banquet. Seely, who was seated next to him, told me that L. complained of feeling ill and was obliged to go home. Five or six hours before he died, he said, "I have fought as hard as I can. I can fight no more." This reminds me of a story he told me regarding his last interview with Gladstone. Mr. G. was lying in a semi-comatose condition. Lyttelton said to the nurse, "I wish he could recognise me." The nurse touched Mr. G. and said, "Here is Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, your favourite nephew." He made no intelligible response, and died soon afterwards. Masterman says that Arthur Balfour is terribly distressed at Lyttelton's death. A memorial service was held this afternoon in the room where the body is lying. Only the family were present. They say that Talbot, the Bishop, conducted the service in a most impressive manner.

6TH.—Golfed with Seely, who told me that yesterday he had come to a momentous decision regarding the Army. He added, "I cannot tell you what it was, but it will have important consequences." During the South African War he was tried by court martial for disobeying an order to retire. He was acquitted on the ground that his action saved the situation. Yesterday at the review, he said to Lord Roberts, "I never dreamed, when under arrest in Africa, that I should occupy such a position as I now hold" [Secretary for War]. Lord R. laughed and replied, "Well, I really forget the reason why I didn't have you shot."

Seely and I called to see L. G. at Walton Heath. Complimenting him on his speech at the National Liberal Club, I said, "It was just the right thing, well graded in all respects."

L. G.: I am glad to hear you say that. It was the only course open to me. I am not a white-sheet man. It does not suit me. I got a tremendous reception. It was amusing to see some of the old Dissenting Ministers when Winston came out with "a damnable attempt." [I forget the exact phrase, but the point was the use of the word "damnable."] They did not quite know how to take it, but after a pause joined wildly in the cheering. I must now set to work on my Land Campaign. I shall give them snuff. I think the scheme will be well devised to meet the grievances, the terrible grievances, that undoubtedly exist.

8TH.—Asquith's speech in memory of Alfred Lyttelton<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Speaking in the House of Commons, Mr. Asquith said :

"It would not, I think, be doing justice to the feelings which are uppermost in many of our hearts if we passed to the business of the day without taking notice of the fresh gap which has been made in our ranks by the untimely death of Mr. Alfred Lyttelton. It is a loss of which I hardly trust myself to speak, for apart from ties of relationship, there had subsisted between us for thirty-three years a close friendship and affection which no political differences were ever allowed to loosen or even to affect. Nor can I better describe it than by saying that he, perhaps, of all men of this generation, came nearest to the mould and ideal of manhood, which every English father would like to see his son aspire to, and if possible to attain. The bounty of nature, enriched and developed, not only by early training, but by constant self-discipline through life, planted in him gifts and graces which taken alone are rare, and in such attractive union are rarer still. Body, mind and character—the schoolroom, the cricket-field, the Bar, the House of Commons—each made its separate contribution to the faculty and the experience of a many-sided and harmonious whole. But what he was he gave—gave with such ease and exuberance that I think it may be said without exaggeration that wherever he moved he seemed to radiate vitality and charm. He was, as we here know, a strenuous fighter. He has left behind him no resentments and no enmity : nothing but a gracious memory for a manly and winning personality—the memory of one who served with an unstinted measure of devotion his generation and his country. He has been snatched away in what we thought was the full tide of buoyant life still full of promise and of hope. What more can we say ? We can only bow once again before the decrees of the Supreme Wisdom. Those who loved him—and they are many, in all schools of opinion, in all ranks and walks of life—when they think of him will say to themselves :

'This is the happy warrior, this is he  
Whom every man in arms should wish to be.'"

was a fine effort—one of the best he has ever made, and one of the finest “in memoriam” speeches on record. It was much admired and appreciated by all parties. Lyttelton was a general favourite, and a fine example of an Englishman.

9TH.—L. G., Robertson Nicoll and Masterman came to dinner at my house. A long discussion as to the best method of presenting the Land Commission Report.<sup>1</sup> They finally agreed that two books should be published, one at 5s. containing the report and evidence, and the other at 1s. containing a vigorously written summary and statement of the case, both books to deal only with the rural districts, the urban report and evidence not being ready. Various people were suggested to write the shilling book, but ultimately their choice seemed to lie between J. L. Hammond and Chiozza Money. Nicoll strongly urged that the facts must be absolutely accurate. L. G. agreed that this was vital: a few mistakes might spoil the whole campaign. He proposes to start the campaign early in October. He said his colleagues in the Cabinet were sympathetic, but that before he began his campaign he must secure their consent. They are to discuss the matter at his house next week. He said that the Commission has cost £15,000, and that he had already supplied copies of the evidence to some of his colleagues. He remarked, “There must be no split. I must carry them with me. There are stiles and fences at which some of them may jib. Those who are great land-owners may not like land courts, which are vital to reform. You cannot allow the farmer to be ground down between the landlord and the agricultural labourer. We are a friendly Cabinet. There has never been a more friendly Cabinet. That is one of its chief characteristics. Grey, when writing to me the other day, mentioned this. It is a surprising fact, because when we joined each other seven years ago some of us were naturally a little suspicious of some

<sup>1</sup> The Commission consisted of Messrs. A. H. Dyke-Acland (Chairman), C. Roden Buxton (Secretary), E. Richard Cross, Ellis Davies, M.P., E. G. Hemmerde, K.C., M.P., Ian Macpherson, M.P., B. Seeböhm Rowntree, M.P., R. Winfrey, M.P., and Baron de Forest, M.P.. Mr. J. St. G. Heath acted as secretary and Mr. R. L. Reiss as head organiser of the rural enquiry section. The Report, published on October 15th, contained an introduction by the chairman, and a “Historical Outline” by Dr. Gilbert Slater, D.Sc..

of our colleagues. Grey, for example, may have been doubtful concerning me, in view of my attitude over the Boer War. But all suspicion has disappeared."

[L. G.'s views as to consulting his colleagues seem to have changed. See notes of a former conversation.]

He said he proposed to start the campaign with three or four speeches by members of the Government. "This will arouse public attention. The Tory Press will attack vigorously, and then we can get to work in real earnest. I shall make no definite statement of my proposals until I have settled the broad lines with my colleagues. I shall not make the mistake Joe (Chamberlain) made of stating my scheme to the country before stating it to my colleagues. Had he acted otherwise, he might have avoided much opposition."

Nicoll talked of Birrell, with whom he had been at Norwich in connection with the George Borrow memorial. He said, "Notwithstanding their brilliance, there is something disappointing in his speeches."

L. G.: He is really a pessimist—that is the reason. He states a case and makes an appeal, and then a feeling seems to come over him—"What is the good of it all?"

NICOLL: Perhaps you are right. Think of the tragedy of his life. His first wife died shortly after their marriage when giving premature birth to her first child. He left her apparently well in the morning, and returned to the task of burying her and her baby in one coffin.

L. G.: I had never heard that. A terrible tragedy!

17TH.—I had to dinner George Davison,<sup>1</sup> the anarchist, of whom more later, Professor Tom Jones,<sup>2</sup> Secretary of the Welsh Insurance Commission, Edward Hudson and Graham<sup>3</sup> of *Country Life*, Weaver,<sup>4</sup> the architectural editor, and James Morton, the great textile manufacturer, who has discovered a new method of printing fabrics so as to preserve their colour—a remarkable man.

<sup>1</sup> d. 1932.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Deputy-Secretary of the Cabinet; Secretary of the Pilgrim Trust since 1930.

<sup>3</sup> P. Anderson Graham; d. 1925.

<sup>4</sup> Afterwards Sir Lawrence Weaver; d. 1930.

Tom Jones brought Davison, whom he knows well. For some time past I have been anxious to meet this strange person. With some difficulty T. J. persuaded him to come. Davison's career is a romance. Years ago he was a civil servant, much interested in photography and honorary secretary of a photographic society. When Eastman of the Kodak Company started business here he applied to Davison to introduce him to a skilled photographer who would join his staff. Davison took the job himself. Later he became a director of the Kodak and retired with a fortune of about half a million. He has now become a sort of anarchist. He lives in a lovely house he has built at Harlech, and devotes a great part of his income to carrying on a kind of anarchist propaganda. He has week-end parties of colliers and railway men, to whom inflammatory lectures and speeches are delivered in a spacious lecture hall, which is part of the house. In short, he is sowing the seeds of revolution. His scheme for the South Wales coalfield was recently defeated by only a narrow majority, and his disciples are agitating vigorously among the working classes throughout the country, but particularly among colliers and railway men. His arguments regarding the incongruities of the existing order are logical enough, but his proposals, involving a communistic state of society, are nebulous and absurd. So far as I can gather, they may be summarised thus: Private ownership is to be abolished! Everyone is to have what he needs and do what he likes! There are to be no leaders! The mass is to decide in some quaint way, which will prevent the majority from coercing the minority! More will be heard of all this. Underground agitation of this sort is certain to produce results. The ordinary political parties make no adequate appeal to the disgruntled masses, and underrate the intensity of their feelings and justice of their case. Davison's manners, like those of most agitators, are pleasant and engaging, but arguing with him is like an encounter with a feather bed. It was a sight to watch the faces of my other guests, except Tom Jones, as Davison propounded his weird theories. Jones, an eager, bird-like little man, who talks in a soft voice with a Welsh accent, acted as if introducing a strange animal at a scientific party. It was amusing to note his fear on the one hand that his charge would not

give an adequate performance, and on the other that he might unduly shock his hearers.

19TH.—L. G. lunched with me. He said that last night he entertained some members of the Government at dinner to talk over the Land Campaign, Crewe<sup>1</sup> and Simon being of the party.

L. G.: Crewe has the feelings of the territorial magnate strongly developed, and does not wish to lose his privileges, but he is a kindly fellow. He has a subtle mind, and put the other point of view very well. The landowner likes to walk round his estate and give a tenant a new cow-house, not because he is legally bound to do so, but like the Almighty because he is graciously pleased to confer a benefit. Simon is a clever fellow, clear-headed but pedantic. He wants everything very precise. Grey is with me. He is a kind fellow, the only man I would serve under except Asquith. I would serve under Grey. He sees that you cannot leave the farmer in the cold. If he is paying the full rent, you must put a part or the whole of the increased wages to be paid to the workman on to the landlord. All parties are sympathetic with the labourer. Where I shall have trouble will be in dealing with the incidence of the increase in wages. Some of my colleagues will kick at the proposal to charge it on the land.

R.: How about Winston?

L. G.: I think he will be all right. He sympathises with the minimum wage, but won't like the proposal that the land shall bear it. Nevertheless, he is a fighter and will enjoy the fray.

R.: How about Haldane?

L. G.: Well, I really don't know where he is. I never know where he is. He is the most confusing clever man I have ever met.

R.: Has the Prime Minister agreed?

L. G.: I have only had one talk with him. He has the papers now. He is a big man. He never initiates anything, but he is a great judge. He brushes aside all small points, and goes straight to the heart of the subject. I prefer to discuss a big project with him rather than with anyone else. That is one of the

<sup>1</sup> The Marquess of Crewe, Lord Privy Seal, 1912-15.

troubles in the House of Commons. He stands so much above the other side and dominates the situation.

R.: He is like a steam roller. He goes straight down the road in a solemn stately way, crushing all the pebbles and small obstacles in his path.

L. G.: And never stopping until he comes to a great boulder and then he deals with that.

R.: Will the new Bill to reform the Lords split the party?

L. G.: I don't think so. The Parliament Bill is not working well. No business could work under such a constitution. The thing must be put in order.

R.: When do you begin the Land Campaign?

L. G.: Early in October.

We talked of Robertson Nicoll and his curious way of living—no fresh air or exercise.

L. G.: How does he do it?

R.: He has a wonderful digestion, a very active mind, and the power of detachment which prevents him from worrying.

L. G.: That is a great quality.

R.: You have it.

L. G.: Yes, to an extent. I should have been dead long ago otherwise. It is an awful life. I would never bring up my son to politics.

R.: How would you like to live it all over again?

L. G. (after a pause): Well, I would go through it all again. I have had my triumphs. I have drawn my sword, and I have put it back again into the scabbard, red with the blood of my enemies.

R.: I don't always agree with your measures, but you are the only man who has had the courage and ability to bell the cat—I should say cats. You have altered the public point of view in regard to the relative positions of the classes. You have altered the whole atmosphere of the English-speaking world.

L. G.: I hope I have. I hope to alter it still more.

I told L. G. about Davison. He was surprised and interested. He said, "I don't think there will be any revolution in our time, but such doctrines create a nasty feeling among people who are already dissatisfied with their condition. If a man like Davison were able to present a practical scheme, he

would be a useful person. As it is, he has nothing practical to propose."

25TH.—Golfed with L. G., Rufus Isaacs and Masterman. M. described with great glee how L. G. had stimulated a discussion on the Road Board in order to shelve a Bill he wished to postpone. He went to several members, saying, "I think we should have a discussion on the affairs of the Road Board." In summing up the debate, L. G. described it as "most valuable"!

We were joined at tea by the McKennas and Donald. L. G. had left for Eastbourne to see his son.

We talked of the Suffragette outrages.

Donald said, "Mrs. Pankhurst is very ill. She will probably die, and then they may assassinate someone."

This remark caused some disquietude amongst the party, but McKenna was not at all upset. He merely said, "Well, we must all do our duty and take our chances."

AUGUST 2ND, 1913.—Golfed with L. G., Masterman and Llewelyn Williams, K.C.,<sup>1</sup> a most amusing man. L. G. said that Williams would certainly become a Judge. Williams told me that L. G. had said to him on the previous day that he would probably become Solicitor-General.

Referring to his speech at Carnarvon on the previous Thursday (I think), L. G. said, "The hall was very hot and trying to speak in." He was much pleased with his sally regarding Lord Northbourne,<sup>2</sup> who had said he would light a fire in his park and roast an ox if L. G. were thrown out of the House of Commons. L. G. retorted in his speech that Lord Northbourne (a very stout peer) would have to be careful to keep out of the way or there might be an error.

9TH.—The feeling between the two parties is very bitter. This is partly due to Bonar Law, who considers social relations between them undesirable. Probably he has been embittered by the somewhat contemptuous way in which he has been treated and spoken of by his opponents. The Marconi affair has left great bitterness on both sides. Now a fresh cause of friction has arisen in relation to a brothel in Piccadilly recently

<sup>1</sup> Liberal M.P. Carmarthen, 1906-18; d. 1922.

<sup>2</sup> d. 1923.



raided by the police. Papers found on the premises contained the names of some patrons of the establishment. Malicious rumours have been set on foot that some of these names were those of prominent men on both sides. The rumours are a pack of lies, but they have engendered much resentment and bad feeling.

SEPTEMBER 23RD, 1913.—Am visiting the McKennas at Dornoch, where they have a furnished house for the season. Perfect hosts. McK. told me that when Lord Charles Beresford was about to retire in 1911, owing to the age limit, it was suggested that McKenna, then at the Admiralty, should make him an Admiral of the Fleet—a great honour. McK. declined on the ground that such an appointment would be misunderstood, as Beresford had been and still was the chief critic of the official naval policy.

McK. talked much about Sir Charles Dilke,<sup>1</sup> who was a sort of political god-father to him. McK. said that at last he was compelled to break with Dilke, who wished to absorb all his time and dominate his life more than he (McK.) thought desirable.

McK. says the King never makes an important public speech without being "advised" by his Ministers. This is part and parcel of the constitution. An important speech is usually drafted by an official and submitted to the King. McK. told with some glee how, when out walking at Balmoral with the King, Queen and Princess Mary, he ran races with the Princess, which made the King and Queen laugh heartily.

26TH.—From what McK. says there is great difference of opinion in the Cabinet over L. G.'s proposed minimum agricultural wage and revision of land rating and taxation. Apparently a section of the Cabinet are not sympathetic towards the working classes.

28TH AND 29TH.—Motored with the McKennas through the Highlands to Turnberry—two pleasant days.

29TH.—Papers full of visit of Asquith, L. G., Winston, Seely and the Attorney-General to Illingworth in the Isle of Arran. McK. says that the visit was arranged some time ago, and that he and other members of the Cabinet were also

<sup>1</sup> 1843-1911.

invited. McK. further says that the P.M. is not keen on the new programme, and L. G. has undertaken not to launch it until it has been approved by the Cabinet. Also that the P.M. thinks the present programme should first be carried out and the launching of the new one deferred for twelve months. He believes the P.M. will do his best not to discuss the new proposals. Whether McK. is correct in all this I rather doubt.

He told me the story of his leaving the Admiralty. In 1911, when the Agadir scare was at its height and L. G. made his Mansion House speech, the P.M., L. G., Winston, Grey and Haldane proposed, in the event of war with Germany, to land 150,000 men on the Continent and desired McK. to arrange for the transport. This he declined to do, as he was opposed to the scheme and the Cabinet had not decided on it. Haldane then alleged that McK. had declined, not for the reasons stated, but because he was unable to make the arrangements. L. G., Haldane and Winston visited the P.M. at Archerfield, whereupon the P.M. wrote to McK. saying that he wished him to go to the Home Office to take charge of the Welsh Bill. McK. said, "I had no alternative unless I wished to resign." He added, "Haldane put me out, but their scheme was a mad one and I did what was right. We had nothing to gain by making France the strongest power in Europe." Talking of the use of troops during strikes, he said that, without consulting him, Haldane sent troops to Chirk during the coal strike. He went to Haldane and said they must be recalled. Haldane declined, whereupon McK. said, "I shall see the P.M., and if he supports you, I shall resign. Troops are unnecessary and may lead to bloodshed, and mine will be the task of defending your action in the House of Commons." Haldane replied, "Well, if my order is cancelled I shall resign." McKenna saw the P.M.. While he was with him Haldane came in. The P.M. said, "The matter must go before the Cabinet." The Cabinet unanimously supported McKenna, and laid down a rule which was communicated to the departments concerned, providing that in future no troops should be moved for this purpose without an order from the Home Office. McKenna told me that Chief Constables are continually demanding military assistance. For example, when the

King was about to visit South Wales, the Chief Constable of Glamorganshire wrote saying he would not be responsible for the King's safety unless he was accompanied by mounted troops. McKenna saw the King and said that, in his opinion, troops were not only unnecessary but undesirable, and that if they were necessary the King should not go to South Wales. The King decided to go without the troops, and the visit was a huge success.

I said, "The Home Office is a difficult job." He said, "Yes, if you want to ruin a man send him to the Home Office."

He told me that great changes are being made at the Admiralty by the introduction of naval men into the equipment departments. He favours the scheme of administration which has always obtained. This made civilians responsible for providing the ships, armaments, stores, ammunition, etc., and naval officers responsible for working them. McK. believes that the naval officer's proper sphere is at sea. He also says that Winston, having been a soldier, is inclined to introduce methods that obtain in the Army, which is run entirely by soldiers.

30TH.—McK. says he had many talks with King Edward about the Parliament Bill. The King always assumed the position of a non-partisan. At the time of the 1909 Budget, McK. told Lord Knollys that he thought the Lords would be mad to reject it, as the rejection would divert the fight to the Constitution, whereas if the Budget were passed, the Liberals would then have to formulate a new policy. Lord K. asked McKenna to embody his views in a memorandum for the King, which he did. The King subsequently saw him and suggested that he should see the Opposition leaders. McKenna replied that there might be objection to this. The King then said he would see Lord Cawdor.<sup>1</sup> He sent for him and Cawdor went to Balmoral, but nothing came of it. McK. said King Edward was a charming host—always most thoughtful, but never fussy.

We talked of the Welsh Church Bill. McKenna says the

<sup>1</sup> Who took the leading part in opposing Mr. Lloyd George's Budget in 1909 and in drafting resolutions for the reform of the House of Lords in the following year; d. 1911.

Government proposed to drop it last session, but he went to the P.M. and threatened to resign if that course were taken. He told me that Campbell-Bannerman, before forming his first Ministry, said of L. G., "I suppose we ought to include him." McK. strongly urged that he should be included.

We talked of the "Cat & Mouse" Act.<sup>1</sup> I said, "You have been lucky. One of the women might easily have died from natural causes."

McKENNA: I quite agree. When I first made the proposal to the Cabinet, they strongly opposed it. I said to them, "If half a dozen of these women die in prison, where will you all be? Any Government would be out in three months!" The Act has worked well, and my colleagues have changed their views.

McK. is a first-class critic and administrator, narrow but logical, accurate, industrious and methodical, deals with his official papers immediately they arrive, and as an oratorical exercise reads Burke's speeches aloud for three-quarters of an hour each day. He says he has done this for years. He is courageous. Notwithstanding the violence of the Suffragettes, he never bothers about police protection. Mrs. McKenna is a clever woman and a good conversationalist. She plays the piano like a professional.

<sup>1</sup> Officially known as the Prisoners (Temporary Discharge for Ill-Health) Act, 1913. It was directed against the Militant Suffragists, and provided that released hunger-strikers could be arrested and sent back to prison when their health was restored. Mrs. Pankhurst, sentenced to three years in 1913, was re-imprisoned eight times, yet served only thirty days in the first year.

## Chapter XX

*L. G. opens the Land Campaign—A momentous speech—The Government's Irish policy—Rufus Isaacs becomes L.C.J.—An education proposal angers the Nonconformists—L. G. advocates the exclusion of Ulster.*

OCTOBER 4TH, 1913 (SATURDAY).—On the road to Walton picked up the McKennas, who were going to Mitcham in a taxi, their car being laid up. Found L. G. awaiting me. I asked him about his forthcoming big speech at Bedford to open the Land Campaign. He said, "I shall give them snuff. I shall smash the whole thing. Agricultural landlords have made an awful mess of things. What sort of a business would you have if you allowed your pleasure to come first and your business second? But this is what they have done and are doing. Sport always comes first." I enquired why he went to the Isle of Arran. He said, "It was necessary that I should see the P.M.. I made such arrangements as were necessary. I can go ahead now. The P.M. was in splendid form. I have never seen him better. He was not worrying about anything."

We talked of the proposed Home Rule Conference. L. G. and McKenna both said, "There will be no conference except under the Parliament Act."

When discussing the forthcoming Royal wedding I asked whether Cabinet Ministers send presents. L. G. and McKenna replied that there was no obligation, as Ministers attend the ceremony in an official capacity. McKenna told us that after his first visit to Windsor, when Queen Alexandra had been very kind to him, he wrote her a letter of thanks. She was delighted. He was given to understand that it was not the practice to write such letters, and that no Minister had ever written to her in this way before.

Later in the evening L. G.'s secretary telephoned asking me to ascertain how long Chamberlain spoke when opening

his Tariff Reform campaign. I made enquiries and telephoned saying one hour and fifty minutes.

6TH.—Discussed with L. G. length of his forthcoming speech. I said, "The Press Association think you should plan it for an hour and a half, so as to leave half an hour for interpolations." L. G. said he could not dispose of his subject under two hours or perhaps two and a half, but agreed that the speech should be kept as short as possible. He ended the discussion by saying, "I have to cover more ground than Chamberlain did at Glasgow."

We talked of Ibsen.

L. G.: Ibsen was a great man. He converted me to women's suffrage. He had wonderful foresight and intuition.

I took Masterman and his wife to Walton. Rufus Isaacs joined us, and told me he had been ill with gout. I said it often attacks great lawyers. He replied, "That does not make it less painful." L. G. arranged to meet Masterman and Isaacs on the following day at Walton to discuss some points of his speech. L. G. told how, in a shop window in Pall Mall, he had recently seen a picture that greatly impressed him. It depicted a poacher, his father and little daughter, with the gamekeeper in the distance. He described the look of fear on the faces of the child and old man, and the look of gloomy determination on that of the poacher. He went into the shop to enquire the price of the picture. It was £200—quite beyond his means.

9TH (THURSDAY).—Called on L. G. at Walton. He said his speech was ready. To-morrow he would go to London and forget all about it. On Saturday he would go to Bedford. He asked whether I had read McKenna and Winston on Ulster. Their speeches were inconsistent, which was unfortunate as it gave the appearance of Cabinet dissension. He thought they should have left the subject to the P.M. and Birrell, as it is their job. Winston had promised to support him (L. G.) on the land question, but had added, "Don't be too hard on the landlords."

Later, after taking a walk, went again to L. G.'s house, this time with Ellis Griffith. We talked of McKenna.

L. G.: He is always decided in his opinions.

R.: That is because he works things out on a mathematical basis.

L. G.: Yes, I agree. Of course he feels he cannot be wrong. He can make a better departmental defence than any man in the House of Commons.

ELLIS GRIFFITH (smiling): I tell him that if the other side would only move a vote of censure on the Home Office in connection with Welsh Disestablishment, he would make a wonderful speech in defending the department.

13TH.—Long talk with L. G.. We spoke of his Bedford speech last Saturday, opening the Land Campaign.

R.: It was a momentous speech—the first official declaration of the Government's intention to abolish the unfettered ownership of land.

L. G.: That is the point the newspapers have not grasped.

R.: It might have been simpler to post on the Prime Minister's door a sheet of black-edged note-paper containing the brief announcement, "His Majesty's Government beg to give notice that they intend to abolish the absolute unfettered ownership of land."

L. G.: Quite correct. The important parts of the speech had been read and approved by the P.M..

R.: No doubt it was necessary not to make the announcement too bald. When you have to announce that people have agreed to something with which they are not strongly in sympathy, it is unwise to hurt their feelings by making the statement too emphatic.

L. G. (laughing): Quite right.

R.: Now you will have to state your proposals in detail as soon as possible.

L. G.: Yes, they are being considered by the Cabinet, and I hope to be able to state them at Swindon next week so far as concerns agriculture. Winston is keen on the campaign. He is going to speak on Saturday. He called on me this morning. I told him that the hall at Bedford was a terrible place to speak in—it was like talking down one of his 13-inch guns!

The McKennas arrived. We had tea together—L. G., the McKennas and Masterman. McKenna related his experiences

on a recent visit to his constituency. He said that Winston had no authority to state, as he did in his speech, that the Government are prepared to consider a compromise on the Irish question. McKenna himself had just made a speech to the contrary.

16TH.—L. G. rang up and asked me to go to Downing Street. When I arrived he greeted me with a copy of the *British Weekly* in his hand and said, pointing to it, "The *British Weekly* leader on my Bedford speech is the best that has appeared. I congratulate you on your part, which I easily recognised. It is the only leader which indicates an accurate knowledge of the situation." [Nicoll and I wrote the leader jointly.]

L. G. had to leave for a Cabinet meeting. Before he went he told me that the Government policy on the Irish question had been settled on the previous day, when they determined to let matters take their course and do nothing. F. E. Smith had been to see him, and had said that the Opposition were in serious trouble regarding Ulster, and did not know what to do, or something to that effect.

17TH.—L. G. in high glee. Yesterday the Cabinet decided on the land policy and authorised him to go ahead. He said, "They felt that I had been loyal to my pledge not to commit them before they had decided on the scheme, and that I could not be expected to make any more general speeches like the Bedford speech. They said to themselves, 'Poor chap! We must do something for him.' There was only one critic."

Winston is to announce the minimum wage for agricultural labourers in his speech at Manchester.

L. G.: He is an artist, and will provide what is suitable for his audience. The question is whether I shall go into my proposals regarding urban properties when I speak at Swindon next week.

Masterman urged him not to deal with the urban question in this speech. What course L. G. will take, I don't know. He is to outline his agricultural policy in detail at Swindon.

31ST (FRIDAY) AND NOVEMBER 1ST, 1913.—Long talks with L. G.. Full of spirits regarding his new land scheme.



Talked much of Chamberlain's speeches, which he said were fine performances.

R.: Chamberlain did not manœuvre the Cabinet as you have done.

L. G. (laughing): Quite true. Joe was a sledgehammer. He would never stoop to conquer.

R.: Is it true that you agreed to give Winston more money for the Navy?

L. G.: Yes.

We talked of public speaking.

L. G.: The beginning of a speech is the most important part. The Welsh orator always begins in a low key, but he has an audience of which he is certain and which understands and appreciates oratorical tricks. That sort of beginning is no good for a political speech in England. You must get hold of your audience at the very beginning, or you may never get hold of them.

He spoke of Spurgeon's sermons, and told how he had recently purchased a copy at a railway bookstall on the Continent, wondering how they would strike him after the lapse of so many years. They had delighted him. He considers them the finest pulpit oratory in the English language.

2ND (SUNDAY).—Spent the day with Rufus Isaacs, the new L.C.J.. He is delighted by his promotion. Yesterday he reminded Lulu Harcourt that his father (Sir William H.) had said, when looking back over his career, "I should have preferred the Lord Chief Justiceship to any other position. It is a great office." He told me that when he was sworn in, he and the Lord Chancellor had to enter by separate doors because one is not entitled to precedence over the other. He said, "It is difficult to realise at once what a great honour has been conferred upon me."

R.: Yesterday when looking over Campbell's *Lives of the Lord Chief Justices* I was much impressed by the succession of brilliant men who have occupied the position.

We talked of his title. He is to be made a peer in the New Year. He said that probably he would take the title of Lord Reading.

I said, "I hope you are going to have your portrait painted



LORD READING IN HIS ROBES AS LORD CHIEF JUSTICE.



by a good man so as to go down to posterity in proper form. A great artist can make his sitters almost immortal." He replied, "I want to be painted in my robes so that the picture may make a good engraving."<sup>1</sup>

R.: Has it occurred to you that you are very like Lord Mansfield<sup>2</sup> in appearance? You have the same high cheek-bones, and, if I may say so, a nose that looks as if it had had a knock.

THE CHIEF (smiling): Well, mine did have one. I am glad you think I resemble Mansfield.

He gave a touching account of his visit to Lord Alverstone, formerly L.C.J.. He is very ill, very thin and worn, but his mind is quite clear. When he was leaving, Alverstone shook him warmly by the hand, and holding it said, "I feel I ought to tell you that if there was an error of judgment in connection with the Marconi affair, which I do not say there was, I was disgusted at the disgraceful manner in which the incident was used for party purposes, and that all along you had my deepest sympathy."

Rufus said some nice things about our friendship, which I much appreciated.

We talked of the Bar. He said, "It is pathetic to see leading counsel, who have expected judgeships, but who are getting too old to expect promotion."

The L.C.J. spoke highly of Sir Edward Clarke.<sup>3</sup> He said he was a great advocate, but relied too much on his speeches to the jury. He always assumed that he could put everything right with his final speech. He did not rely enough on the cross-examination, which should consist of a series of small, effective speeches.

We spoke of L. G.. Rufus said, "It is obvious that he has made a bargain with Winston. Our people are beginning to see it. It will be unpopular."

<sup>1</sup> It has long been the custom for Lord Chancellors and Lord Chief Justices to be painted in their robes with a view to the issue of engravings, for which the legal profession have a special fancy.

<sup>2</sup> 1705-93. One of the greatest English judges; Chief Justice, 1756-88.

<sup>3</sup> Solicitor-General, 1886; counsel in the Penge case (1877), the Baccarat case (1891) and the Jameson case (1896); d. 1931.

NOVEMBER, 1913.—Played golf with Mr. and Mrs. Winston and L. G.. A good deal of talk regarding the Naval estimates. Winston evidently perturbed at the attitude of a large section of the Radicals. He said, "Why is Donald attacking me in the *Chronicle*?" L. G. and I replied, "Not on personal grounds, but because he believes he is voicing the views of the party. He is not against you. He is opposed to your policy."

Later Donald appeared and friendly greetings took place between him and Mr. and Mrs. W.. Donald having left, we again talked of the Naval estimates. Winston said, "I have been working hard in cutting down the figures. It is a tremendous job. I have been doing my best to meet your demands." L. G. rather dissented, whereupon Winston said, "Well, I withdraw that. You have always been generous to me." They both agreed that Treasury criticism of the estimates in detail was useless, and that the only course was for the Cabinet to fix a certain figure and say, "There it is. You must keep within that limit," leaving the Admiralty to do their best.

Much talk about Masterman and Macnamara and Cabinet promotion. L. G. and Winston agreed that Masterman had the better brain, but that Macnamara had done splendid service for the party, and represented an important point of view not now represented in the Cabinet. L. G. said the Prime Minister had no sympathy with men of Macnamara's type, and did not understand them. I gathered that Masterman is likely to get the next vacancy, and that L. G. and Winston will strongly support Macnamara for the following one. They both spoke of him in high terms as a man and colleague.

12TH.—Harry Lawson told me he had heard that L. G. some months ago proposed to the Cabinet to exclude Ulster from the Home Rule Bill, or to grant it some concession in the nature of exclusion, but that this had been strongly opposed by Loreburn.

Dined with Robertson Nicoll, who was full of a meeting of Free Church representatives on the education question. He described it as very influential, and said that those present were bitter against the Government. He said that Pease, the

Education Minister, was proposing to deal with the single-school areas by conveying the dissenting children to the nearest County Council Schools in omnibuses. Nicoll waxed very wrath about this plan, which he compared to conveying little lepers in tumbrils. He added that the Committee which had been appointed proposed to issue a manifesto damaging to the Government. He had written a private note to Pease, who had replied asking him to go and see him, which he did not mean to do, as it was not his business to run after Cabinet Ministers. He had written to Pease only as an act of friendship to the Government, who, he said, had treated the Dissenters very badly.

13TH.—Called to see L. G.. Found him at the Cabinet. Wrote a note telling him of my talk with Nicoll and urging the Government to give the matter attention. Mrs. L. G. sent the note to L. G. at the Cabinet.

Then I called on Illingworth and told him what had taken place. He seemed much concerned. Ultimately it was arranged that he, L. G. and Pease should dine with me on the Monday to meet Nicoll. I wrote to Nicoll, but he replied declining. He said he did not wish to meet Pease.

15TH.—Spent the day with L. G. at Walton. He thanked me for my note, which he said he had shown to the Prime Minister at the Cabinet. He told me that Asquith, Haldane, Crewe and Grey had dined with him on Wednesday (12th inst.) to discuss several important matters, one of which was education. He said, "The time is ripe for a judicious article in the *British Weekly*. I agree with my dissenting friends. Why don't they say what they want? Why not go to the Prime Minister and tell him? The single-school area is the real question. Why don't our friends formulate their scheme?" I said, "You must see Nicoll." I wired N. saying L. G. and I would go to his house to dinner on Sunday night.

L. G.: My dinner on Wednesday was one of the most important gatherings I have attended. We came to some important decisions, so important that I made a note of what took place, a thing I have never done before. It was a historic occasion.

R.: How do you estimate Crewe?

L. G.: He has no initiative or force, but he is sagacious and good in council. He never says anything not worth listening to.

R.: I hear that you proposed to exclude Ulster in some way, but that Loreburn opposed it.

L. G. (surprised): Well, as it is known, I may as well tell you that your information is quite accurate. Not only did he oppose me, but he was most violent. He said that no self-respecting man would listen to such a proposal. And now he is posing as a peacemaker. I was so angry with him that I did not write him a letter when he left the Cabinet.

R.: What did you think of Redmond's speech yesterday?

L. G.: Very fine. One of the best of recent speeches. A logical argument stated in an eloquent, convincing way. He is one of the few good speakers we have.

R.: He spoke in a very definite way about Ulster.

L. G.: Well, of course, he must put his claims high.

16TH.—Spent the day with the McKennas. I asked McK. if it was true that Loreburn had opposed the exclusion of Ulster. He said, "Yes, strongly. His present position is therefore strange. He opposed L. G.'s suggestion very strongly."

McKenna seemed delighted that Redmond had been so emphatic, and said, "That shuts the door."

At tea we were joined by Winston and his wife and Lady Ridley.

Talked afterwards with Winston, who spoke of flying, which he said had done him much good and given a new zest to life. The aeroplane, contrary to his expectation, now gave greater promise than the waterplane.

With L. G. to Nicoll's house at Hampstead. L. G. tactful and pleasant. He expressed great interest in Nicoll's library, and seemed much impressed by the fact that it contains no writing materials. Nicoll dictates practically everything. L. G. opened the ball in his customary ingenious manner by saying he was glad that Nicoll was going to write, etc., as this was just the time for an article, thus apparently agreeing with Nicoll in principle. Then he went on to say what sort of an article—of course an article which, while stating the Dissen-

ters' point of view, would not be unfriendly to the Government. A delicate piece of diplomacy. Whether Nicoll saw this or not, I don't know. He said he did not intend to write an article, but that the Committee proposed to issue a manifesto. L. G. then urged that the Committee should in the first instance approach the Prime Minister. Nicoll said they would not do this. Ultimately on my suggestion Nicoll agreed to write a private letter to the P.M. on the following day, telling him how matters stood and warning him of the necessity for prompt, definite action. L. G. said the P.M. would no doubt read this to the Cabinet, and he felt sure all would be well. He added that Pease had no authority to pledge the Government to the proposals which had excited so much wrath, and that Silvester Horne was largely responsible for the unsatisfactory position, as he had failed to stand up to Haldane and Pease in the Committee which had been sitting to deal with the question. Nicoll said the Dissenters distrusted Haldane.

L. G.: Haldane is known to be unsound on this question, and no attention will be paid to his views.

We talked of Haldane's recent speech, in which he emphasised the necessity for some mental or physical stand-by as an antidote to the disappointments of life. Nicoll said the speech was very good.

L. G.: Haldane is a warm-hearted, kindly man. A big man.

R.: He is not very popular. Not so popular as Grey.

L. G.: He is more human than Grey. Grey is a fish-like person.

R.: Anyway, he appeals to the British people. They like him and trust him.

L. G.: No doubt they do, but he is a fish.

[And therefore not sound on L. G.'s land policy!—R.]

L. G.: Haldane is a splendid fellow when he takes up a scheme. Most helpful. Always endeavouring to be of use.

[Not being a fish, he understands the land!—R.]

We talked of Ireland. L. G. said that Dillon<sup>1</sup> is the biggest of the Irish leaders to-day, but oldish and broken.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. John Dillon, M.P. Co. Mayo E., 1885-1918; d. 1927.



L. G.: Ireland will require a big man at the Irish Office. Birrell is not the man.

NICOLL: He is a curious man. While the Larkin business<sup>1</sup> was at its height, I saw a ten-page letter from Birrell in his own handwriting addressed from Sheringham to Clement Shorter regarding George Borrow! A strange way for the Irish Secretary to employ his time during such a crisis.

R.: No doubt he was following Haldane's advice by endeavouring to find a mental distraction! [This pleased L. G. and Nicoll, who both laughed heartily.]

L. G.: I don't know who should be sent to Ireland. We want a strong man. It is strange we have exhausted all our lawyers. I don't know any first-class man on our side who has not got office.

NICOLL: Lawyers will soon spring up. They have a way of springing up.

L. G.: McKenna might do for Ireland. He is a good administrator.

NICOLL: Yes, but he does not carry weight, for some reason.

When driving home I questioned L. G. about the topics discussed at his dinner on Wednesday, but evidently he was not at liberty to tell me more. No doubt they discussed the land policy, Ulster and the reform of the House of Lords, in addition to the education question. But L. G.'s memorandum will show some day.

<sup>1</sup> James Larkin was one of the leaders of the so-called Citizen Army, formed in Dublin in 1913 to enforce better labour and housing conditions. On October 27th, 1913, he was sentenced to seven months' imprisonment on an indictment charging him with sedition, but the Liberals demanded his release, and he was released from Mountjoy Prison on November 13th.

## Chapter XXI

*Cabinet crisis over the Navy estimates and Ulster—Attempts to “down Winston”—An L. G. interview causes a sensation—He threatens to resign—The Committee of Defence and the possibility of war with Germany.*

DECEMBER 13TH, 1913.—The Navy estimates and the Ulster question are causing serious differences in the Cabinet. There is, no doubt, strong opposition to Winston on both. I saw McKenna to-day. He has been working up the case for reducing the estimates, and is strong against concessions to Ulster. Evidently much worried. The story published to-day about the Ulster settlement dinner is incorrect. L. G. was not there. The diners were Winston, Lord Morley, F. E. Smith and Austen Chamberlain. Masterman says the outlook is black. Devlin tells him that the Irish Party will not consent to anything in the nature of exclusion for Ulster, and that the Irish leaders could not, if they would, carry such a proposal with their followers. Ministers (L. G., Masterman, McKenna, etc.) are talking of civil war as a possibility.

14TH.—McKenna said he had been worried about the Navy estimates and Ulster. His wife told me that he does not know how to act about the estimates, that L. G. as Chancellor will not take the lead, and that McKenna does not know whether he (McK.) should. McK. has told me (R.) several times that in his opinion L. G. does not control public expenditure as he should.

Masterman says that Samuel,<sup>1</sup> Hobhouse,<sup>2</sup> Pease and Runciman have formed a combination against Winston on the estimates. McKenna was very bitter regarding the Ulster dinner.

L. G., whom I saw later, said, “I shall be no party to

<sup>1</sup> Now the Rt. Hon. Sir Herbert Samuel, Postmaster-General, 1910-14.

<sup>2</sup> Now the Rt. Hon. Sir Charles Hobhouse, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1911-14.

driving Winston out of the Cabinet. I do not agree with some of my colleagues."

R.: He was very loyal to you over the Marconi business.

L. G.: Yes, I know, and shall never forget it. Of course I have been too easy during the past two years regarding the Naval estimates. When he went to the Admiralty I made a bargain with him about expenditure. He has not kept it. He has been extravagant. Now the feeling against him is very strong. I think, however, he will amend his figures to meet the views of the party.

The Dissenters have been appeased in regard to the education question. The Prime Minister has determined to abandon any attempt at compromise in regard to single-school areas. He is going straight ahead to carry out the Dissenters' policy. It seems that Haldane and Pease were beaten to a frazzle in the Cabinet.

18TH.—Things are in a critical state. There are grave disputes in the Cabinet regarding the Naval estimates. Winston is being bitterly attacked in the Liberal papers. Samuel, Simon and Runciman are doing their utmost to force him out of the Cabinet. Masterman says he thinks he is sure to resign, but whether he will resign over the estimates or Ulster remains to be seen.

L. G. says the position is acute. Evidently he sees that the party are strongly against Winston and is considering his position. He told me to-day that Samuel, Simon, Runciman and Co. are doing their utmost "to down Winston." Also that the Prime Minister has received strong protests from some of his most influential supporters in the country. He said that Seely made a sort of "bleating speech" in Winston's defence, but received no support.

I said, "Will Winston resign?"

"Not now," replied L. G., "but I think he will later on. If he is wise, he will try to fall in with the views of the Cabinet, and if I were you I should advise him to do so. His Guildhall speech was a piece of madness. The public will not stand provocative speeches of that sort. They are quite unnecessary. Winston has been a loyal friend to me, but there comes a time

when one cannot allow oneself to be influenced by personal considerations of that sort."

Masterman says he thinks Winston may resign and the result may be serious for the Government. He also remarked that L. G. did a fatal thing for Winston when he persuaded the P.M. to send him to the Admiralty, and that since he has been there he has lost all touch with Liberalism and has become a man of one idea. He added, "It is a curious history. During McKenna's time at the Admiralty Winston and L. G. strongly objected to the Naval estimates and L. G. threatened to resign. A stormy interview took place between the P.M., L. G. and McKenna, at which McKenna was much upset. The dispute was ended by McKenna undertaking to reduce the estimates."

Later I called on the McKennas. Saw Mrs. McK.. She says that McK. felt he could not join in the attack on Winston and that Winston is certain to resign, but will probably go out on Ulster and not on the estimates, which will be a better thing for the party. Seely called on McKenna last night. S. said he had not seen Winston, but McKenna thought he came to ascertain how the land lay. Mrs. McK. also told me that the P.M. is furious about Winston's speech at the Guildhall—that he did not know what W. was going to say, and was astonished.

19TH.—Called to see L. G. at Downing Street. Found him in his bedroom, dressing. He told me he had not been very well and that the doctor said he had been working too hard. He seemed rather disconsolate that he had to make a speech at Pwllheli on Monday (this was on the Friday). He told me he was in that state "when one's brain will produce nothing original." I said, "Must you speak?" To which he replied, "I must. If I don't they will not understand. If they hear I have been playing golf, they will not believe I cannot speak. People cannot understand that sometimes the only thing one is incapable of is the task of producing fresh ideas." I enquired what had been done concerning the Navy estimates.

L. G.: They have cornered Winston.

R.: What line did McKenna take?

L. G.: He took no active part, but supplied powder and shot in the shape of technical information, which was very useful.

R.: How about Ulster? Is it true that Asquith has been conferring with Bonar Law?

L. G.: Nothing fresh. They have been conferring all the time. [He said this with some hesitation. Evidently he was not anxious to impart information.] T. P. O'Connor was here this morning. Full of fight. The Irish are a wonderful people. How they rejoice in the prospect of a row!

L. G. told me he was leaving for Criccieth on the following day. We wished each other all sorts of good things for the New Year.

20TH.—Masterman denies that he is about to enter the Cabinet. He says there is no vacancy. He confirms what L. G. told me regarding the Naval estimates.

22ND.—The L.C.J. told me that Alec Murray is on his way home and will have to make a public statement. Masterman, who was present, said the statement should be made in the House of Lords. The L.C.J. agreed.

I said, "Was Alec Murray courageous?"

THE L.C.J.: Yes, courageous, but inclined to be rash.

24TH.—Played golf with the L.C.J., his son and Masterman. A nice Christmas telegram arrived from Mr. and Mrs. Winston. They are in France.

AT END OF DECEMBER, 1913.—Dined with the L.C.J. at Curzon Street. L. G., Robertson Nicoll, Masterman, Alfred Sutro the dramatist<sup>1</sup> and self. An interesting evening with much good talk, but unfortunately I have been too busy to make notes of it.

JANUARY 6TH, 1914.—The Government is in a critical position. The public suspect, but do not know, the truth. The interview with L. G. on the Navy published in the *Daily Chronicle* has caused a sensation.<sup>2</sup> It is regarded by those in the know as unnecessary and indiscreet. It is obviously provocative

<sup>1</sup> d. 1933.

<sup>2</sup> On January 3rd Mr. Lloyd George published in the *Daily Chronicle* an interview in which he denounced the folly of expenditure on armaments, and said that in his opinion the prospects of the world were never more peaceful.

to Winston, who has declined to make any statement "upon a subject which is being considered by the Cabinet." I hear there was rather a sharp passage at the last Cabinet between Winston and L. G.; that W. left without speaking to L. G., and that the result is a breach between the two. Whether this is true, I don't know. Until recently L. G. has been strongly in favour of keeping Winston in the Cabinet. He has often said so to me.

Masterman was in a superior mood to-day. He remarked, when speaking of L. G.'s *Daily Chronicle* interview, "He is rash. We [he did not define 'We'] never ought to leave him alone for long. When he is alone, he is always fulminating. I have on many occasions saved him from trouble by persuading him to scrap his effusions. It is strange that a man who can be so discreet and tactful at a meeting or in the House of Commons should do such rash things. The truth is that there are several personalities in that big head of his."

I replied, "You can safely trust L. G. to look after himself. He has paddled his own canoe with a fair measure of success for a good many years, and will continue to do so, although no doubt he will give it some nasty jolts."

I had a long talk with McKenna. He takes a gloomy view of the situation. He says the Government may break up on the Navy estimates. He strongly disapproves of L. G.'s interview. He says Winston has acted indiscreetly, but has been allowed to go on and make arrangements which have been negatived at the last moment. L. G. should have taken the estimates in hand months ago; instead of which he took no step until forced to do so by his colleagues.

McKenna doubts whether the Navy people would work well with Samuel if he were appointed to succeed Winston. They would not like a Jew. He also says that whoever becomes First Lord will take over a bankrupt concern, as all the money has been spent, and that L. G. will fight against having to levy fresh taxes.

[I understood from Masterman to-day that Winston had been asking for £10,000,000 more.]

McK. told me that the trouble has arisen partly owing to arrangements for Naval expenditure having been made by

Asquith, L. G. and Winston outside the Cabinet. McK. thinks Winston must resign.

Masterman says that Winston wants to go out over Ulster, not the Navy. He spoke of a conversation between Winston and L. G., at which he was present, when Winston said, "You understand that if a shot is fired I shall go out." Whereupon L. G. said, "Don't be foolish. If we offer reasonable concessions and they won't accept them, you could not reasonably take a course highly prejudicial to yourself and the Government."

Masterman says that when speaking at the Guildhall, Winston should have deplored the necessity for increased expenditure. This would have done much to disarm opposition.

8TH.—The L.C.J. tells me that he has selected "Reading of Erlegh" as his title. He is full of spirits and energy.

We talked of the Kikuyu discussion.<sup>1</sup> He said,

"The Archbishop is very wily, with a great gift for useful interpretation and explanation. Robson<sup>2</sup> and I discovered this when we settled the Coronation Oath with him."

He told a good story of Lord Alverstone, a former L.C.J.. Some time before his retirement he was seriously ill, his complaint being bleeding at the nose. When he recovered, it was noticed that if Robson—the Attorney-General, who would succeed him should he retire—was present, he always made a point of vigorously blowing his nose to show he was all right again.

He also told some good election stories. One specially amused me. After a meeting in a provincial town he went to have supper with the chairman, who had invited a large party to meet him. He sat next to the chairman's wife, prim and

<sup>1</sup> Bitter controversy had arisen over the action of the Bishops of Uganda and Mombasa in permitting non-episcopalians to join in communion at a conference of missionaries working in British East Africa. The Bishop of Zanzibar appealed to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Davidson), who referred the matter to the consultative body of Lambeth Conference. The result was a pronouncement that full intercommunion was at present impossible, but that non-episcopalians isolated from their own communions would be welcomed at Holy Communion in Anglican churches.

<sup>2</sup> The Rt. Hon. Sir William (later Lord) Robson, Attorney-General, 1908–10; d. 1918.

frigid. During a lull in the conversation he heard his host remark, "When my wife and I were in Paris, we had a wonderful time. We saw everything there was to be seen." This gave Rufus courage. He smiled at his hostess, and remarked, "I heard your husband say that when you were in Paris you had a wonderful time." The lady responded, in acid tones, "That was the first Mrs. . . .!"

Rufus gave an interesting account of his experiences as an apprentice on a sailing ship. By accident he succeeded in knocking down the boatswain, the biggest man on board, and thus gained great kudos with the men. He made his first speech when heading a deputation to the captain regarding weevils in the ship's biscuits. He deserted at Rio, was captured and made to work for a month shovelling coal from the hold of a steamer. I asked him why many Jews covertly sneer at Christians. His explanation was that the Jews believe they are the Chosen Race. To prove this he recited a Hebrew prayer, which bore out what he said.

He mentioned that he was hard at work on the Report of the Royal Commission upon the Law Courts, and hoped to make some useful reforms.

9TH.—Mrs. McKenna told me that Asquith dined with them last night. He is very worried, and says he needs a rest cure. He does not mind Winston resigning so much, but Grey is furious over L. G.'s interview in the *Daily Chronicle* and refuses to be placated.

10TH.—McKenna confirmed the above. He says that Grey may now side with Winston and that matters are serious.

He also told me that some of the judges are imperfectly acquainted with prison rules and regulations, which they should understand for the purposes of their sentences. He proposes to take steps to remedy this. There is an erroneous impression that prisoners of Class II receive better treatment than those in Class III, whereas the treatment is the same, the prisoners in Class II being placed in that class because their character is better than those in Class III.

16TH.—McKenna and his wife dined with us.

He describes the position as serious. He dined with



Winston last night. He says Winston has shown his fangs and they are pretty big fangs. He has cornered the P.M., who is committed up to the hilt to all that Winston has done. He has it all down, chapter and verse. McK. fears that L. G. will have to change his attitude, as he also is committed.

17TH.—I asked L. G. about the now famous *Daily Chronicle* interview.

He said, "It contained nothing I have not said before, but, as I have often seen, at one time a statement attracts no attention, while at another the same statement sets the whole world agog."

R.: I suppose you gave the interview without premeditation—probably out of good nature, to help some poor reporter?

L. G.: That was just what took place. Naylor, a reporter on the *D.C.*, came to Criccieth and asked me for an interview. He called three times, and at last I gave him something. (Then suddenly looking at me fixedly.) Well, I shall go. I shall not give way.

R.: What? You don't mean to say you intend to resign?

L. G.: Yes, that's what I mean. I am backward in entering upon a quarrel. It was long before I decided to take up my present position, but having entered upon the controversy, I shall pursue my course. Samuel, Runciman and Co., who started the controversy, will probably back out, but I shall not. The P.M. must choose between Winston and me. Our meeting (L.G. and Winston) yesterday was quite friendly. We came to no agreement. None seems possible. What the issue will be, I don't know. It looks as if either Winston or I will have to go. We now ascertain for the first time that Winston has exceeded the estimates by no less than £5,000,000. That is gross extravagance.

R.: How is it that the Treasury did not learn this earlier?

L. G.: The material was sanctioned, but the £5,000,000 represents extras. You only see the bill when it is presented. The national credit has been pledged, and the obligation must be met. There is no alternative. I am not a "little Navy" man. I don't want to reduce the Navy. I only want reasonable economy. I am not fighting about that. Winston says he can

make no more reductions. The truth is that he is not a Liberal. He does not understand Liberal sentiment.

Later L. G. had a long talk with McKenna and Masterman regarding the estimates. Afterwards he said to me, "McKenna need not fear. I shall not put the P.M. in a false position. I shall not fight the estimates on questions on which he is committed."

We talked of L. G.'s future if he resigned. He said that his wife would readily economise and make it no hardship. He seemed worried and anxious.

18TH.—Called on Winston. Found him dictating replies to messages of condolence regarding the loss of a submarine. Interesting to see him carefully constructing the replies.

As we drove from the Admiralty, he said, "I don't know how long I shall be here. The position is acute. I cannot make further economies. I cannot go back on my public declarations. L. G. will find the Cabinet with me. The P.M. is committed to the expenditure up to the hilt. I can make no further concessions. I cannot agree to any concealment of the actual figures. I think I know the English people. The old Cromwellian spirit still survives. I believe I am watched over. Think of the perils I have escaped."

[L. G., as I have already recorded, believes the same about himself. If there is a row, it will be interesting to see which guardian angel is the stronger!]

Winston continued, "I have never felt so fit as I do now. I have slept well through all this worry. Flying has done me good. If I resign, I shall take a small house at Carnoustie, near Dundee, and deliver a series of speeches setting out my political views. That will be my platform."

Called to see L. G., and told him roughly what Winston had said.

L. G.: Then I can see that things are going to be very awkward. Probably I shall have to go.

R.: If you go, the Government goes!

L. G.: I don't agree. I might be more useful to them out than in. I should do all I could to help them. This armament question is serious. It is time that someone took a stand. I want to see the Disestablishment Bill through.

R.: Would you go on with your Land Campaign?

L. G.: Yes. I should devote myself to it.

R.: Winston said he had canvassed no members of the Cabinet.

L. G. (anxiously): Tell him that neither have I. Some of them called on me, and I have to see Grey to-morrow, but I have canvassed no one. To-morrow I meet the P.M..

When speaking to Winston, I said, "Will you join the Tory Party?"

WINSTON: No, certainly not! On no account. I am a Free Trader, and quite out of sympathy with their attitude to the working classes.

Later I saw McKenna, who said that perhaps the true policy of the Liberal Party should be to adopt Winston's estimates and give him another job, so as to guarantee future economy.

Later on talked with McK. and Masterman, who both strongly commented on naval extravagance. They agree that if L. G. resigns the result will be to break up the party.

23RD.—Masterman describes the position as still acute, but thinks things will be settled. Last night he and L. G. were to go out to dinner. At 8, L. G., who was worn out, said, "Let me have half an hour's sleep." When he got up, he said he was too tired to go out. So they sent for oysters, the maids prepared some ham, and they dined at Downing Street. He says that letters received by L. G. from his wife and other Welsh people, urging him, for the sake of the Welsh Disestablishment Bill, not to resign, have been great factors in the situation. He added that the P.M. told L.G. he would not go on without him and that if he resigned he would dissolve at once. Masterman repeated that Simon and Samuel are anxious to get Winston out of the Cabinet. This is evident from their manner.

24TH.—Golfed with L. G., Winston and Donald. L. G. and Winston engaged in frequent private talks. Both evidently much worried. We had tea with the McKennas and Masterman. Much talk about the estimates. The McKennas are to lunch with L. G. at Walton to-morrow. I drove home with them. McKenna says he thinks L. G. and Winston have come

to an arrangement, but that it may not be acceptable to some of their colleagues. McK. told L. G. that this might place him (L. G.) in an unfortunate position, as the resignation of even a minor member of the Cabinet might be disastrous.

I said, "I doubt if any minor member will resign."

McK. agreed, but thought a resignation or resignations possible.

25TH.—Lunched with Mr. and Mrs. Winston.

W. told me that things are still in a serious position. He said, "L. G. will not make up his mind to side with me. If he would, we could win easily. 'The crew' have no stomach for a fight. I know them!"

Winston and I went to tea with L. G. at his house. They had a long private talk in a separate room. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian* had been lunching with L. G.. Scott is bitter about the estimates.

When driving home, Winston said, "This long-continued delay is most wearing. I can't make David (L. G.) out. I can make no more concessions. The Admiralty Board would not agree. It is useless to put political arguments to them. The Liberal Party is nothing to them. Indeed, they would not be sorry to see us out. All their professional friends are begging them to stand firm. The chief point now relates to ships in commission in home waters. We have twenty-nine and the Germans twenty-two. I cannot reduce the number. L. G. is accustomed to deal with people who can be bluffed and frightened, but I am not to be bluffed or frightened! He says that some of the Cabinet will resign. Let them resign!"

As we drove into the Admiralty, I said, "Well, you have one pull over your critics."

"What is that?" he asked.

I said, "You are only thirty-nine years old!"

He laughed rather bitterly.

L. G. is being assisted in criticising the Admiralty figures by a young Treasury clerk named Hawtrey, a nephew of the actor. When a boy at Eton the said Hawtrey wrote an article criticising the Navy. It was published in one of the reviews. Sir William White, the Chief Naval Constructor,<sup>1</sup> wrote an

<sup>1</sup> d. 1913.

exhaustive reply, but when he found out who wrote the article he added a postscript that he would not have replied had he known that the author of the article was an Eton boy. L. G. says that young H. is useful. He was for some time in the Admiralty. To-day Winston and I found Hawtrey at L. G.'s. I gave H. a lift to the station. Subsequently Winston told me that he had been compelled to forbid Hawtrey access to the Admiralty, and to decline to furnish him with figures for which he had asked. He said that H. had taken upon himself to criticise the naval policy of the Admiralty Board, which had much annoyed the Admirals.

Called on McKenna, who again referred to L. G.'s inability to make up his mind.

I said, "L. G. is always for compromise."

McK.: Yes, the sort of compromise in which Winston will get all his own way.

I then raised the question of ships in commission.

McK.: Yes, that is the point. It is a great question of naval policy. It was fought out when I was at the Admiralty. The Committee of Defence decided that a war with Germany at a few hours' notice, we having no information as to their intentions, is a practical impossibility. There is no need to keep twenty-nine ships in commission. A reduction in the number is the only means of reducing the estimates.

McK. said that feeling runs high on naval questions. Some time ago, when McK. was engaged in an acute controversy, a great "lady," much interested in naval matters, put out her tongue at Mrs. McK. when they were alone in the Ladies' Gallery at the House of Commons. How Mrs. McK. responded he did not say.

31st.—Called on L. G., who said, "The naval question is not yet settled. Winston will have to give way. The economists in the Cabinet have their own committee. I have declined to join in the hunt, but Winston has been extravagant and placed me in a false situation." L. G. spoke bitterly and evidently feels strongly.

## Chapter XXII

*The naval crisis settled—L. G. negotiates with the Irish Party—His triumph in the House—Winston's plain speaking to Ulster—Sir John French and Colonel Seely talk of the Curragh Revolt.*

FEBRUARY 1ST, 1914.—I saw McKenna, who said, "Winston will have to give way. We are determined to cut down his figures."

Called at the Admiralty to see Winston. Found him and Mrs. Winston playing with the children—delightful little creatures. I had one of my fingers bound up with plaster. Little Diana came to me as she was about to go upstairs and whispered, "It does hurt me so to see your poor finger." Had a long chat with Winston, who said, "I have made a smashing case. General statements as to extravagance are worth nothing. Let them go into details and I will meet them. The Cabinet will have to read my papers and hear my explanation. I am confident I shall win. I shall refute general allegations with specific facts."

R.: What does Asquith say?

WINSTON: I have not seen him. He will have to sum up the discussion in the Cabinet.

5TH.—L. G. tells me that the Navy question is still unsettled and that Winston is becoming impatient.

6TH.—Telephoned to Winston and begged him to be patient. Told him I was confident matters would be adjusted satisfactorily in the end.

22ND.—Lunched with L. G.. He has had a nasty touch of influenza and seemed very seedy.

26TH.—The Navy question has been settled! McKenna says, "We have got another £1,000,000 off the estimates. Winston is to give up the manœuvres and to submit his speech to the Cabinet." McK. seemed pleased with the result.

And so ends a great struggle. No resignations and no

drastic revision of the estimates. What a world it is! Winston is in high spirits, and well he may be.

MARCH 6TH, 1914.—L. G. full of the Irish question. He has been conducting negotiations with the Irish Party. Asquith is to make a statement on Monday. I said, "I hear you have adopted the principle of the referendum, and that each of the Ulster Counties is to have the option of exclusion from the Home Rule Bill."

L. G.: Yes, it has been in the papers. The P.M. is furious. He says that if any member of the Cabinet has made the disclosure he will have to go. I have had a tough job. The Irish are rare negotiators. They bluff so well that you really cannot tell whether they are bluffing or not.

R.: Has Devlin agreed?

L. G.: Yes. He has acted well. He is the man who will have the troublesome task. Winston is now against the Ulster Unionists if they will not accept our plan.

R.: How is the P.M.?

L. G.: Worried, but he does not say much. In times of difficulty I always notice that his chin and jaw seem to shrink. Winston's, on the other hand, become more prominent. The P.M.'s trouble is that he hates anything unpleasant or in the nature of a row. He hates an unpleasant interview. He said to me, "I think you had better have a preliminary conversation with the Irish." He thought it would be an unpleasant and troublesome task!

7TH.—Masterman says that being the youngest Cabinet Minister he has to carry the papers into the Cabinet room and set them out on the table for his colleagues. He tells me that L. G. is the only man in the Cabinet who has initiative, and that his superiority in that respect is marked. M. has been struck and surprised by the courage with which Winston faces problems.

Talked with L. G. and Masterman concerning the Tories in the House.

L. G.: They are fools. When they have a good case they spoil it. They let me head them off in an absurd fashion. They rise in an extraordinary way. They make some interruption. I appear to get angry and retaliate. As a rule, they lose sight of

the main issue and give me an opportunity to divert the discussion to some personal question more or less irrelevant. The House loves a scene. As a matter of fact, I am rarely angry (laughing). In their own interest they ought to be gagged!

Illingworth told me that the P.M. was furious at the disclosure of his Irish plans, and would have called for the resignation of any member of the Cabinet proved to have divulged them. Donald told me that one of his men got the information from an Irish member last Monday (March 2nd). McKenna says this story will not hold water, as Donald himself had the information last Saturday (February 28th).

10TH.—L. G. had a triumph in the House on the motion to condemn him for inaccurate statements and abusive language. He made a fine speech and received an ovation. Congratulated him over the telephone at 11.30.. He said, "I smashed them. It really was a triumph. I am feeling very bucked, but shall be like a wet rag when the excitement is over."

13TH.—Long chat with L. G.. He said, "The Tories managed badly on Tuesday (the 10th). F. E. Smith was particularly weak. The P.M. and Winston wanted me to speak last, but I decided to speak after the proposer and seconder. I knew what line F. E. Smith would take. I sent three men to the British Museum to hunt up what had been said about Joe [Chamberlain] and his land campaign. I knew that, by the time I had finished, the House would have had enough of that sort of thing, and that when F. E. began they would say, 'This is nothing fresh,' and would lose interest. It turned out as I had anticipated. F. E. was very sick. I could see it. Bonar Law lay back in his seat and laughed heartily. In fact, I think most of the Tories were secretly pleased. Bonar Law is the best man they have."

14TH.—L. G. told me that Winston is going to make a big speech on the Ulster question to-day.

L. G.: I got him to do it. I said, "This is your opportunity. Providence has arranged it for you. You can make a speech that will ring down the corridors of history. I could not do it. The P.M. could not do it. You are the only member of the Cabinet who could make such a speech. You are known to



have been in favour of conciliation for Ulster. Now you can say that, having secured a compromise, the Ulstermen will either have to accept it or take the consequences." Winston has prepared a magnificent speech. It will be one of the best he has delivered. I told the P.M., who was rather alarmed. He said, "I must see it." I said, "Neither you nor I could make such a speech. Winston can." The P.M. remarked, "My game is more the olive branch." He has agreed that Winston shall make the speech. It will be timely. There are occasions when you must speak out. This is one of them. I have been sympathetic with Ulster all along, but we are trustees for the nation. This is not a question of the Liberal Party only. We stand for law and order, and must see that the nation is not held up by a few malcontents.

15TH.—Winston has made his speech. Very good it was. Rang him up and congratulated him. He said, "It was necessary, absolutely necessary, that there should be some plain speaking."

The Liberal Party are reported to be in fine fighting form. Robertson Nicoll told me that the Nonconformist Conference at Norwich was most enthusiastic in favour of the Government. He said, "We are back again in 1906 so far as concerns the Dissenters." Nicoll favours giving Ulster the right to take another ballot at the end of six years to decide whether they will come in or stand out for six years more. I mentioned this to L. G. and T. P. O'Connor. They both seemed surprised and expressed the hope that Nicoll would not propound this plan in the *British Weekly*. They asked me to write to him, which I have done, but he has replied saying that he proposes to make the suggestion in a guarded way.

22ND.—Great excitement regarding Ulster. Resignation of Army officers reported. It is said that the Londonderrys and Lord Roberts have been inciting them to resign. The King had Lord R. to Buckingham Palace yesterday and, it is rumoured, urged him to abstain from interference with the Army. Mrs. McKenna says she and her husband dined with Montagu last night at Queen Anne's Gate. The P.M. was there and seemed cheerful. He said he believes that the Ulster reports are exaggerated. McKenna confirms what L. G. said as to

the P.M.'s pacific rôle. Yesterday L. G. made a big speech at Huddersfield on the same lines as Winston's speech of last Saturday. McK. said to me, "I wonder what the P.M. will think of L. G.'s speech? The P.M. is more for peace." I responded, "More in the olive branch line?" McK. said, "That's right."

24TH.—A bomb has burst in the form of the extraordinary Seely memorandum.<sup>1</sup> Tremendous excitement. The Radicals furious. Painful scene at the Cabinet, I hear, when the P.M. lectured Seely on the enormity of his offence.

29TH.—Played with L. G., Reading and Masterman. Much excitement regarding the political situation. R. said, "I wish I could throw away my wig and gown and join in the fray." I observed, "You are much better where you are!" at which L. G. laughed. L. G. looked grey and worn. He told

<sup>1</sup> In his book *Adventure* (Heinemann) Lord Mottistone gives the following account of the origin of this memorandum: Early in March the War Office received information that attempts were to be made to seize arms and ammunition from various depots in Ireland, and Sir Arthur Paget, Commander-in-Chief in Ireland [d. 1928], was ordered to take steps to protect them. When the orders for the movement of troops reached the Curragh Camp, they were misinterpreted by some officers as the prelude to an attempt to coerce Ulster—an impression strengthened by an indiscreet speech of Sir Arthur Paget's—and Brigadier-General Gough and others announced that they would refuse to take part in such operations. General Gough was at once relieved of his command and ordered to report. On March 24th he met Colonel Seely and Sir John French at the War Office, and the misunderstanding having been cleared up, he was restored to his command. Colonel Seely then presented him with a memorandum, initialled by himself, Sir John French and Sir Spencer Ewart, Adjutant-General [d. 1930], setting out the facts of the case.

'The Government have no intention whatever,' it stated, 'of taking advantage of their right [to use troops to maintain law and order] to crush political opposition to the Home Rule Bill.'

Before returning to Ireland that day, General Gough, still afraid of the difficulty of convincing his officers, again saw Sir John French and wrote on the document the question, 'Does this mean my men will not be ordered to Ulster?' Sir John French wrote underneath: 'I so read it.' The document got into the possession of the Press, where the emendation was made to appear 'like a private bargain with a few rebellious officers.' Demands were made in Parliament and the Press for its withdrawal, but Sir John French, while regretting the inference that had been drawn from his addition, refused to give way, and resigned. Thereupon Colonel Seely resigned with him, and Mr. Asquith added the duties of War Minister to those of Prime Minister.

me it had been a tremendous week and that his throat was giving him trouble again. He was, however, in wonderful spirits, and obviously pleased when I said that he always played better during a crisis. He responded, "A crisis always steadies my nerves." McKenna told me that he considered the whole business a wretched muddle, and spoke strongly about Seely and Paget.

Long interview with Sir John French, who said he would like me to state in the *News of the World* to-morrow that his resignation would not be withdrawn, and to give his version of recent happenings. He added, "There is no paper so widely read in the Army, and by doing this you will be performing a national service."

SIR JOHN: Do you think that as a soldier I can go back on what I have signed? I am not a lawyer or a politician.

R.: Well, sorry as I shall be to see you resign, I cannot see that you have any alternative.

SIR JOHN: They (the Cabinet) have been doing their best to find a way out, but it is impossible. These are the facts. Paget had no instructions or authority from me to put the questions he addressed to Gough and the others. Why he put them was a mystery. I think he was not sure of his officers. He is a friend of mine, but I know that tact is not his strong point. He is apparently responsible for all the trouble. He may have had instructions from Seely about which I do not know, but I have no evidence of this and think no such instructions were given. Seely has always acted loyally to me. When he brought me the memorandum I believed it to be a Cabinet document. I saw the P.M.'s hand-writing and did not know that Seely had added to it. But had I known, I should still have acted as I did. I knew I must get the officers back that night, and would have gone to almost any length to accomplish this. I had messages from all over the country which convinced me that Gough's resignation would be followed by hosts of others, and that the disaffection would speedily spread to Egypt and India. I knew also that the men would follow their officers, and I told Seely, "Unless you get these officers back to-morrow night, you will have no army." Seely had talked about court-martialling Gough and those who acted with him, but I would not hear of

it. I knew such a course would be fatal. On Thursday I met a Committee of the Cabinet consisting of the P.M., the Lord Chancellor (Haldane), L. G. and Winston Churchill. They strongly urged me not to resign, but I said I could see no alternative. On Friday morning I had an interview with the Lord Chancellor, who spoke at great length. He envelops one in a mesh of arguments. At last he drew up a memorandum which we both initialled. I have it in my pocket now. In this he set forth that I was willing to withdraw my resignation on certain conditions, and that subject to the approval of the Cabinet it had been agreed that a phrase from his speech in the House of Lords on Monday should be substituted for the two peccant paragraphs in the Seely memorandum. This phrase reads, "No coercion has or will be used towards Ulster," or words to that effect. The Cabinet declined to accept this arrangement. Asquith was to have made his statement at noon, but it was adjourned till 5 p.m.. I met the Committee again, and we had a long talk. Nothing having been agreed, I ultimately said, "Mr. Asquith, when you go into the House of Commons you are like a general going into battle. You are able to judge the temper of the House. This afternoon you will easily judge what will satisfy your followers. I will wait and see what you say and whether I can accept the position as you state it or not." The Committee agreed this would be the best plan to adopt. Asquith made his statement and we are just where we were. There is no alternative. I must go. Seely has held back his resignation in order to make it easier for me to stay. I can't stay. I don't see how I can stay, so we shall all three of us (Seely, Ewart and I) have to go.

30TH.—The P.M. has made the dramatic announcement that Seely, French and Ewart have resigned, and that he will become Minister for War. The Radicals are delighted, and regard this as an intimation that the P.M. intends to trounce the Army. I am confident that he proposes to do nothing of the sort. There are two sections in the Cabinet, who hold different views as to recent events. On the one side Haldane, Morley, Grey and Harcourt, and on the other L. G., Winston and McKenna. Had the P.M. appointed someone in sympathy with either side trouble would have resulted. He is trusted by

both sides, and will do his utmost to avoid friction. He does not believe in a democratic Army, I am quite sure, and will not go further in that direction than is absolutely necessary. He is a crafty old dog.

APRIL 2ND, 1914.—Spent the day with Seely. He is evidently much distressed, but I noticed he ate a good breakfast, lunch and tea, which looks well.

Before starting we took a secret packet to the offices of the Committee of Defence. He spoke freely of recent happenings. He said, "I feel no bitterness and don't intend to become a disgruntled man. When I had to make my recent speeches in the House of Commons, I felt anxious. I had not been sleeping well. I feared I might say something better left unsaid. It is a curious sensation to sit on the benches awaiting one's turn. I involuntarily thought of my swim in the storm (when he swam out with a rope to a French schooner, was nearly drowned and seriously injured) and said to myself, 'This is another occasion requiring nerve and courage.' It has been a queer, topsy-turvy business. The trouble has been chiefly due to Paget, an indiscreet man. When Haldane appointed him Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in Ireland, I was Under-Secretary. I strongly protested. I said, 'There are troublesome times ahead in Ireland. He is not the man for the job. He has no tact.' Haldane would not take my advice. I remember that I walked to the Horse Guards with him, protesting all the way. I felt so strongly that I nearly resigned. And now he (Paget) has put me in the cart. French is a fine fellow. I did my best to make it easy for him to stay. Morley agreed with what was done. Of course I did my best to save French. He (F.) looked over the added words, made some slight alterations, and said, 'That will do well.'"

I (R.) mentioned the memorandum drawn up by Haldane on Friday last and the extract from his speech. Seely, continuing: "Yes, that is quite correct. But now he has altered the official report by introducing the word 'immediately' so as to make the phrase read 'No coercion has been or will immediately be used towards Ulster.' There will be a nice row about that! He has acted foolishly."

20TH.—Called to see L. G.. Found his throat somewhat

better, but he is still very hoarse. Talked of the alleged plot regarding Ulster. He said, "There was no plot, but no doubt Winston and Seely talked to Paget about hypothetical situations, and led him to think active operations were intended. When Paget returned he began his speech to the Commanding Officers by saying, 'I have just come from London and I believe the ———s mean business!'"

Dined with French, who said that no doubt Paget got a wrong impression when in London, and acted on it. F. added, "The question of interference by the political heads of the Navy and Army is a serious one. They should not give orders direct. They should act only through the executive."

24TH.—L. G. says he has had a deputation from back-benchers who have an ingenious plan to settle the Irish question. They want him to take up the negotiations and endeavour to effect a settlement. He said, "I have asked them to come to Walton. I told them I could give them no lunch, so they are going to bring their lunch with them. I am so busy with my Budget that I am afraid I cannot devote my mind to this business, but I suppose I must see what I can do."

He says that the P.M. let Winston down badly last night, and that Winston is much upset. The P.M., on being asked when he first heard of the movements of the Navy towards Ireland, replied, "On the morning of the 21st, and in the afternoon I countermanded the orders." L. G. says the other side did not at first see the importance of this reply, but are now on the alert. The result will be to give a fresh impetus to the rumours regarding the alleged plot.

L. G. said, "The P.M. ought not to have done this. I have been trying to make peace."

Last night Robertson Nicoll told me of an amusing visit paid by Hodder-Williams, the publisher, to Marlborough House. Hodder-Williams wrote a book after the death of King Edward called *My Master*, by Cæsar, the King's dog. It had a large sale. Cæsar died a few days ago. Hodder-Williams sent a wreath, which pleased Queen Alexandra. She invited him to Marlborough House to be thanked in person. He was received by Sir Dighton Probyn and Miss Knollys,

who thanked him on Queen Alexandra's behalf. Old Miss Knollys remarked, "Bonar Law is trying to get Asquith out, but he won't succeed. Asquith is a wily old man and a safe man. L. G. talks in a violent way, but he has been brought up on those lines, and knows no better, but Winston Churchill is a bad man. He has been well brought up, and should know better."

25TH.—L. G. is in a rage with Herbert Samuel, who yesterday made a speech in which he prophesied large subventions to the Local Authorities, thus forecasting the Budget. L. G. says this is a gross breach of confidence and that he has written a strong letter to Samuel. L. G. described Samuel as an ambitious Jew.

Long talk regarding cottage accommodation, L. G. contending that one living-room is sufficient for all purposes. I said we should try to create a higher standard, and that people should not be required to live, cook and do the washing in one room. In twenty or even ten years' time, I am confident that leading democratic statesmen will express very different opinions about housing. Millions of people are living under deplorable conditions.

I hear that the Government action in Ulster was due to a private letter from Colonel Repington,<sup>1</sup> military correspondent of *The Times*, to the P.M., who on receipt of it called upon Seely to do what was necessary to protect the Government stores and ammunition. L. G., Masterman and Sir John French all admit that the letter was the cause of the Government's proceedings.

30TH.—Spent the day with Seely, who made some surprising statements. He implied that he had been made a scapegoat and said that the facts were :

1. The Government, stimulated by Colonel Repington's letter to Asquith, determined to take action, both naval and military.

2. That they lost their nerve and countermanded the naval orders, but that he, Seely, declined to vary the military orders, which were executed.

3. That his memorandum created a new situation, and

<sup>1</sup> d. 1925.

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caused him to be regarded as the pusillanimous member of the Cabinet, whereas he was the only resolute member.

He said, "I became suspicious regarding the Navy. I went to see Winston (I think S. said on Sunday night). I said to Winston, 'Where are the ships? Surely you have not given an order that they are to sail forty degrees eastwards?' (A naval phrase indicating that they were to proceed to the English Channel.) I stood by the mantelpiece. Winston was sitting in his chair. There was a deep silence. I could hear the clock ticking. Winston said, 'I am grieved. I will do all I can to save you!' And," Seely added, "he did, but he and the Cabinet went back on me, nevertheless. I have been sorely tempted to tell the whole story. The night when Grey spoke I was sitting by him. I said, 'You must not censure me, or I shall have to speak out.' Just then a note from John Ward came round. I read it. It said, 'What we want to know is whether the memorandum represents the policy of the Government.' I handed it to Grey, and remarked, 'Remember what I said just now!' He replied, 'You must not worry me. I am just going to speak.' I said, 'That is why I am mentioning the subject.' Grey was careful in his speech to have regard to what I had told him. John Morley says I have been treated in an infamous fashion and that I should state my case to the public, but I don't mean to do so."

Mrs. McKenna told me that Asquith was ready to go to Belfast on Sunday if there was any prospect of serious disturbance. [There was a gun-running episode on Saturday.]

Seely said to-day that the Irish police declined to take part in coercive measures against Ulster. This was one difficulty the Government had to contend with. Birrell had been weak and vacillating. He added, "What can you expect with Birrell as Irish Secretary, Aberdeen as Lord-Lieutenant and Paget as Commander-in-Chief of the military forces? In this instance Asquith arranged things badly."



## Chapter XXIII

*Masterman loses an election—His fear of a revolution—The Liberal organisation—Irish negotiations break down—The Government revise the Budget—L. G. confers with Northcliffe—The shadow of war.*

MAY 17TH, 1914.—Golfed with the L.C.J. and the McKennas at Swinley Forest. Much talk regarding Masterman and his prospects at Ipswich, not regarded as favourable. McKenna evidently does not favour the Budget. He does not like the local subventions, and thinks the rating proposals complicated and unworkable. The L.C.J. told me that Sankey<sup>1</sup> [the new judge and a good judge too—an old friend of mine] had a stroke of luck. His appointment was decided on in a few hours. Low, K.C.,<sup>2</sup> was to have been appointed, but the Whips vetoed an election because they said Low's seat was so risky. When Illingworth, one of the Whips, heard of the proposal, he said, "If you do this you will only do so over my dead body. I shall resign!" Whereupon Sankey, who had not been mentioned before, was appointed. [L. G. confirmed this when I saw him on the following Saturday.] The L.C.J. gave an interesting account of a dinner party at Curzon's in connection with the Kahn Travelling Scholarships. He said that C.<sup>3</sup> was most hospitable and tried to be pleasant, but subconsciously he is superior and self-satisfied.

23RD.—Called to see L. G. at Walton. He thinks Masterman certain to be defeated. L. G. said that Masterman should have attacked the other side and particularly Northcliffe, who has made such a personal attack upon him. At night I telephoned the result to L. G.. [Masterman badly beaten.] He said he was not surprised and that it would be a severe blow to the Government. I also telephoned the result to Mrs. Masterman, who took the news quite well, although she was

<sup>1</sup> Now Lord Sankey.

<sup>2</sup> Sir F. Low, K.C., appointed Judge of the High Court 1915 ; d. 1917.

<sup>3</sup> d. 1925.

obviously much upset. This is not surprising, particularly as she expects an addition to the family before long.

24TH.—Called to see Masterman. Found him in bed. He said he should never have been asked to fight Ipswich. Defeat was certain from the first. L. G. and Illingworth were responsible for sending him there. He had had a serious quarrel with L. G. about it—the only serious quarrel they had ever had. The result was chiefly due to the Insurance Act, which should have been voluntary and free to the poor. “I am the victim,” he concluded. I said John Redmond told me it was an act of cruelty to send him (Masterman) to Ipswich unless an arrangement had been made with the Labour Party. This pleased him and he replied, “John Redmond knows what he is talking about.” M. said he had noted with surprise that all the poorest sections of the town were strongly opposed to him. The placards of his opponent were displayed in every window, and he (Masterman) was hissed and booed by the women and children. His supporters were the mechanics, small shopkeepers, etc.. He said that L. G.’s letter in connection with the N.E. Derbyshire election had done him (Masterman) serious damage in the contest.

Called to see L. G.. He asked me to stay to dinner, which I did. He then entertained me by singing Welsh hymns, his daughter accompanying him on the piano. The Mastermans came to dinner, bearing no trace of Mr. M.’s grievances against L. G.. Masterman started a discussion on the condition of the country, and propounded the theory that revolution might be nearer than we thought. He also drew a comparison between the state of affairs that preceded the French Revolution and that which obtains to-day. I said the people wanted more wages, which they meant to have. They would not be put off by doles. I ridiculed the imminence of a revolution. L. G. agreed with me, and said he thought the chances “more than twenty to one, but you must not forget the one.” He added, “It is only fair to Riddell to say that he has for years pointed out the impending labour troubles and strongly advocated the living wage.”

R.: And how the movement has progressed! The idea used to be ridiculed by the Liberal Party.

L. G.: Yes. When I settled the first railway strike I wrote to Campbell-Bannerman saying that Parliament should exact a minimum wage for railway workers. He sent my letter on to Asquith, who replied that it was impossible. I have the letter somewhere. I don't know where it is. I am so careless in these matters, but I remember that Asquith would not hear of it.

We had a long talk about some Welsh plays L. G. had been to see at Cardiff. He gave a graphic account of them, and of the miners and other working people who had been the principal performers. Very bright, vivid and interesting.

L. G. said the Liberal Party organisation is very bad. Illingworth has too much to do. The party should appoint a whole-time assistant. I suggested Wedgwood Benn. L. G. said he thought he was the best man available.

L. G. says the great difficulty regarding Ulster is the two outlying counties, in which the Nationalists will probably secure a majority. The Ulstermen will not give them up.

JUNE 13TH.—Spent the day with L. G., Masterman and Donald. Masterman says L. G.'s Budget is unpopular and that he (L. G.) is worried. He did not seem so, however, and was full of fun. He told me the negotiations for an Irish compromise had broken down. There were things neither party could relinquish. He spoke much of Masterman, kindly and almost affectionately, but said he is unpopular in the House of Commons and not as industrious as he might be. L. G. seemed pleased that Theodore Roosevelt, who is in London, had asked that he (L. G.) should be invited to meet him. L. G., however, expressed a poor opinion of Roosevelt, but spoke highly of Woodrow Wilson. Yesterday I sent L. G. a copy of Wilson's speeches—very good.

14TH.—Spent the evening with L. G. at Downing Street. When I arrived he was lying on the sofa reading Bagehot's economic essays. He read an extract regarding Gladstone's finance and remarked, "You see, they have always been talking in the same way. They spoke of Mr. G. as they now speak of me." L. G. then referred to the opposition to the Budget. He said, "I did not want a taxing Budget this year.

It was not the time for it. Winston forced us into it by increased naval expenditure."

R.: But that did not necessitate these big figures.

L. G.: No, but while we were about it there was no reason why we should not provide for other things besides the Navy. I am disgusted with these rich men. I think I shall have to say a few words regarding their attitude. The fall of the Ribot Ministry in France is significant. It shows that the people will not accept a ministry which represents the contented and well-to-do. The Prime Minister has that attitude, but will do things when pressed.

R.: Have you seen Alec Murray lately?

L. G.: Yes, I saw him two or three days ago. He was a great loss to the Liberal Party. Illingworth is a nice fellow, but not a first-class Whip.

L. G. continued (laughing), "It would have paid the party to settle Alec's debts out of the party funds to enable him to stay on. He never should have left politics."

McKenna tells me that the Budget is going to have a troublesome time. He is evidently opposed to it.

20TH.—Golfed with Lord Dunedin, Reading and J. Stevenson. A pleasant day. We lunched with the McKennas and Masterman. Masterman remarked that the Budget is going badly and L. G. is not pleased.

Reading says circuit work is rather tiresome. He does not like trying criminal cases. The sexual cases are loathsome.

23RD.—Had a talk with McKenna. (Yesterday the Government jettisoned a great part of the Budget proposals and reduced the income-tax by 1d.) McK. said, "The whole thing has been a shocking muddle; the Budget Committee knew nothing of L. G.'s proposals until their meeting shortly before the introduction of the Budget. L. G. spoke for three hours explaining his scheme, which left no time for discussion. The Bill as drawn was very complicated, many of its chief provisions being in the schedules. It would have required three months to pass it. L. G. talked of passing it in a week, which was absurd. The House of Commons is not in the mood for heavy, tedious Bills."

It was evident that McK. was not sorry for what had happened. He has all along expressed himself in the same way.

JULY 1914.—Attended the Lord Mayor's banquet to the bankers. L. G. made the usual speech. After dinner an interesting incident occurred. The Lord Mayor<sup>1</sup> told me that L. G. and Northcliffe wanted to meet and that he was taking them upstairs to a private room. Then Rothermere (Northcliffe's brother) said he was endeavouring to bring L. G. and Northcliffe together. Then L. G. told me he wanted to see Northcliffe privately. Finally the two went upstairs to the Lord Mayor's room. L. G. evidently eager for the interview. No doubt he wants to secure N.'s support on the Irish question. This was on Thursday or Friday, I forget which. On Monday *The Times* and *Mail* came out with the exclusive statement of the conference called by the King. On the Sunday I had a long talk with L. G., who was very reticent as to what had taken place with Northcliffe. The Liberal papers are furious at *The Times* and *Mail* getting this information beforehand. They blame Asquith, who does not hesitate to express his contempt for the Liberal Press and is suspected of leanings to *The Times* as a gentleman's paper! According to L. G., the L.C.J. says Carson is relying on what he believes to be Asquith's character. When at the Bar Asquith was always for settlements and compromises. Carson knows this and does not believe he will fight now. L. G. says he must fight—the party will insist on it. I had a long chat with McKenna regarding Asquith. McK. says A. has wonderful judgment but no power of action, so that inferior men who act are frequently more effective. McK. is of opinion that had the Ulster rising been suppressed in its early days, things would have been different now.

L. G. says Balfour thinks that John Simon is inclined to take a narrow view of things. The Conference has broken down, as I thought it would. It was doomed to failure. Alec Murray has come on the scene again in some mysterious way. What part he has taken in the Conference I don't know, but

<sup>1</sup> Sir Vansittart Bowater.

he has been very busy. He telephoned congratulating me on something I wrote regarding the Conference, and saying it had given much satisfaction to important personages. I replied, "If you want anything, ask for it straight out. If I can help you, I will."

9TH (? date).—Spent the day with L. G., who gave an amusing account of the private lunch given by Theodore Roosevelt. The P.M. was there with Grey, L. G. and others. The P.M. sat opposite Roosevelt. When R. declaimed trite statements such as "I believe in liberty but liberty with order," the P.M. glowered at him with a look of curiosity. "I think Roosevelt saw it," said L. G.. He added, "When I came to discuss American politics with Roosevelt, I saw where his strength lay. He thoroughly understands the racial questions upon which politics really turn in America. He knows what the Germans want, what the Poles want, what the Irish want, what the Italians want, etc., and he knows how to compound a policy that will make a wide appeal."

We talked of Joe Chamberlain, who died on Thursday.

L. G.: He was a wonderful man. He possessed courage, the greatest of all political qualities. But he was a failure. [I wonder if he was!—R.]

11TH.—Spent the day with L. G., the L.C.J. and Donald. The L.C.J. repeated that trying criminal cases was hateful although necessary work, particularly sexual cases. He gave a graphic description of the trial of a girl charged with concealment of birth. She was a respectable girl—a mechanic's daughter. She had been deceived by a promise of marriage. The man had disappeared. In the dock she was broken with grief and shame. The Chief said, "Having read the depositions I endeavoured to catch her eye as she sat there sobbing her heart out, but could not attract her attention. I wanted to convey to her that she had at least one friend in Court." Ultimately, owing to the evidence, he was able to tell the jury that the prisoner must be acquitted. The Chief told the story well and was visibly affected. When he had finished, I said, "You earned a lot of good marks in the Recording Angel's diary this week, Chief." He had made my eyes

glisten, and as I looked at him I saw his were glistening too. He is very kind-hearted. Later the talk turned to Bagehot's Constitution, which the Chief had recently been discussing with the King. The King told him that when he was a youth a course of reading had been provided for him by some educational expert. This included Bagehot. One day Queen Victoria saw him reading Bagehot's economic essays. She was quite displeased that he should be studying such a radical writer. By the way, the King has a passion for statistics. The birth rate, the death rate, home and foreign trade, etc..

12TH.—L. G. has had a bad week. His stock stands low with the party. The Budget has been a fiasco. Nevertheless, he seems in excellent spirits and full of fight. His courage and powers of endurance are wonderful. He must possess an extraordinary nervous system. To-day (Sunday) I motored with him, Mrs. L. G., and Masterman to Selsey, Sussex. It was amusing to see L. G. trying to make his dog swim. Later we discussed the position.

L. G.: The Parliamentary draftsmen let me down badly. They should have found out beforehand what the Speaker's decision would be.

L. G. made facetious references to the consequences likely to ensue in the next world owing to his having "let off the millionaires by reducing the income-tax." He never seems to take things to heart. In his own opinion he is always right. If his schemes go wrong, the mishap is always due to negligence or malign influences for which he is not responsible. On the other hand, he never minds giving way. He is always prepared to compromise, and is never cast down when beaten or when his plans go awry.

26TH (SUNDAY).—This evening I telephoned to L. G. informing him of the Dublin Riots and that several people had been killed. He was much distressed, and said the incident would cause fresh and serious complications. He spoke at length of the foreign situation. He said that Austria had made demands on Servia which no self-respecting nation could comply with, and that such demands, when addressed by a great nation to a small one, were in the nature of bullying

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threats. He said the situation was serious, but he thought there would be peace—in fact, he thought so very strongly.

[The bombshell fell shortly afterwards.].

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FOR CONTINUATION OF LORD RIDDELL'S RECORD SEE HIS *WAR DIARY* (JULY 27TH, 1914, TO NOVEMBER 13TH, 1918), PUBLISHED MAY 1933 BY IVOR NICHOLSON & WATSON, AND HIS *INTIMATE DIARY OF THE PEACE CONFERENCE AND AFTER* (NOVEMBER 1918 TO NOVEMBER 1923), PUBLISHED OCTOBER 1933 BY GOLLANCZ.



## APPENDIX

THE following extracts are taken from Mr. Lloyd George's celebrated Limehouse speech, delivered for the Budget League on July 30th, 1909:

A few months ago a meeting was held not far from this hall, in the heart of the City of London, demanding that the Government should launch into enormous expenditure on the Navy. That meeting ended up with a resolution promising that those who passed that resolution would give financial support to the Government in their undertaking. There have been two or three meetings held in the City of London since, attended by the same class of people, but not ending up with a resolution promising to pay. On the contrary, we are spending the money, but they won't pay. What has happened since to alter their tone? Simply that we have sent in the bill. We started our four *Dreadnoughts*. They cost eight millions of money. We promised them four more; they cost another eight millions. Somebody has got to pay, and then these gentlemen say, "Perfectly true; somebody has got to pay, but we would rather that somebody were somebody else." We started building; we wanted money to pay for the building; so we sent the hat round. We sent it round amongst workmen, and miners of Derbyshire and Yorkshire, the weavers of High Peak, and the Scotchmen of Dumfries, who, like all their countrymen, know the value of money. They all dropped in their coppers. We went round Belgravia, and there has been such a howl ever since that it has completely deafened us.

But they say: "It is not so much the *Dreadnoughts* we object to, it is pensions." If they objected to pensions, why did they promise them? They won elections on the strength of their promises. It is true they never carried them out. Deception is always a pretty contemptible vice, but to deceive the poor is the meanest of all. But they say, "When we promised pensions we meant pensions at the expense of the people for whom they were provided. We simply meant to bring in a Bill to compel workmen to contribute to their own pensions." If that is what they meant, why did they not say so?

The Budget, as your Chairman has already so well reminded you, is introduced not merely for the purpose of raising barren taxes, but taxes that are fertile, taxes that will bring forth fruit—the security of the country, which is paramount in the minds of all, the provision for the

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aged and deserving poor. It was time it was done. It is rather a shame for a rich country like ours—probably the richest in the world, if not the richest the world has ever seen—that it should allow those who have toiled all their days to end in penury and possibly starvation. It is rather hard that an old workman should have to find his way to the gates of the tomb, bleeding and footsore, through the brambles and thorns of poverty. We cut a new path for him, an easier one, a pleasanter one, through fields of waving corn. We are raising money to pay for the new road, aye, and to widen it so that 200,000 paupers shall be able to join in the march. There are many in the country blessed by Providence with great wealth, and if there are amongst them men who grudge out of their riches a fair contribution towards the less fortunate of their fellow-countrymen they are very shabby rich men.

We propose to do more by means of the Budget. We are raising money to provide against the evils and the sufferings that follow from unemployment. We are raising money for the purpose of assisting our great friendly societies to provide for the sick and the widows and orphans. We are providing money to enable us to develop the resources of our own land. I do not believe any fair-minded man would challenge the justice and the fairness of the objects which we have in view in raising this money.

But there are some of them who say: "The taxes themselves are unjust, unfair, unequal, oppressive—notably so the land taxes." They are engaged, not merely in the House of Commons, but outside the House of Commons, in assailing these taxes with a concentrated and a sustained ferocity which will not allow even a comma to escape with its life. Now, are these taxes really so wicked? Let us examine them; because it is perfectly clear that the one part of the Budget that attracts all the hostility and animosity is that part which deals with the taxation of land. Well, now let us examine it. I do not want you to consider merely abstract principles. I want to invite your attention to a number of concrete cases; fair samples to show you how in these concrete illustrations our Budget proposals work. Let us take first of all the tax on undeveloped land and on increment.

[Mr. Lloyd George here quoted half-a-dozen instances in which land had sold at high prices, although it had contributed only insignificant sums to the rates.]

They say: "Why should you tax this increment on landlords and not on other classes of the community?" They say: "You are taxing the landlord because the value of his property is going up through the growth

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of population, through the increased prosperity of the community. Does not the value of a doctor's business go up in the same way? "

Ah, fancy their comparing themselves for a moment! What is the landlord's increment? Who is the landlord? The landlord is a gentleman—I have not a word to say about him in his personal capacity—the landlord is a gentleman who does not earn his wealth. He does not even take the trouble to receive his wealth. He has a host of agents and clerks to receive it for him. He does not even take the trouble to spend his wealth. He has a host of people around him to do the actual spending for him. He never sees it until he comes to enjoy it. His sole function, his chief pride, is stately consumption of wealth produced by others. What about the doctor's income? How does the doctor earn his income? The doctor is a man who visits our homes when they are darkened with the shadow of death; who by his skill, his trained courage, his genius, wrings hope out of the grip of despair, wins life out of the fangs of the Great Destroyer. All blessings upon him and his divine art of healing, that mends bruised bodies and anxious hearts. To compare the reward which he gets for that labour with the wealth which pours into the pockets of the landlord purely owing to the possession of his monopoly is a piece of insolence—if they will forgive me for saying so—which no intelligent man would tolerate. Now that is the half-penny tax on unearned increment.

[Mr. Lloyd George next dealt with the Reversion Tax, and went on :]

Look at all this leasehold system. This system—it is the system I am attacking, not individuals—is not business, it is blackmail. I have no doubt some of you have taken the trouble to peruse some of those leases, and they are really worth reading, and I will guarantee that if you circulate copies of some of these building and mining leases at Tariff Reform meetings, and if you can get workmen at those meetings and the business men to read them, they will come away sadder but much wiser men. What are they? Ground rent is a part of it—fines, fees; you are to make no alteration without somebody's consent. Who is that somebody? It is the agent of the landlord. A fee to him. You must submit the plans to the landlord's architect, and get his consent. There is a fee to him. There is a fee to the surveyor; and then, of course, you cannot keep the lawyer out. He always comes in. And a fee to him. Well, that is the system, and the landlords come to us in the House of Commons and they say: "If you go on taxing reversions we will grant no more leases." Is not that horrible? No more leases! No more kindly landlords. With all their retinue of good fairies—agents, surveyors, lawyers—ready always to receive ground

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rents, fees, premiums, fines, reversions—no more, never again! They will not do it. We cannot persuade them. They won't have it. The landlord has threatened us that if we proceed with the Budget he will take his sack clean away from the hopper, and the grain which we all are grinding our best to fill his sack will go into our own. Oh, I cannot believe it. There is a limit even to the wrath of outraged landlords. We must really appease them; we must offer up some sacrifice to them. Suppose we offer the House of Lords to them? (Prolonged cheering.) Well, you seem rather to agree with that. I will make the suggestion to them.

[Here Mr. Lloyd George turned to the tax on royalties, and described a visit he had recently paid to a coalfield.]

In the very next colliery to the one I descended, just a few years ago, 300 people lost their lives by fire. And yet when the Prime Minister and I knock at the door of these great landlords, and say to them: "Here, you know these poor fellows who have been digging up royalties at the risk of their lives, some of them are old, they have survived the perils of their trade, they are broken, they can earn no more. Won't you give something towards keeping them out of the workhouse?" they scowl at us, and we say: "Only a ha'penny, just a copper." They say: "You thieves!" And they turn their dogs on to us, and you can hear their bark every morning. If this is an indication of the view taken by these great landlords of their responsibility to the people, who at the risk of life, create their wealth, then I say their day of reckoning is at hand.

The other day, at the great Tory meeting held at the Cannon-street Hotel, they had blazoned on the walls: "We protest against the Budget in the name of democracy, liberty, and justice." Where does the democracy come in in this landed system? Where is the liberty in our leasehold system? Where is the seat of justice in all these transactions?

I claim that the tax we impose on land is fair, just, and moderate. They go on threatening that if we proceed they will cut down their benefactions and discharge labour. What kind of labour? What is the labour they are going to choose for dismissal? Are they going to threaten to devastate rural England by feeding and dressing themselves? Are they going to reduce their gamekeepers? Ah, that would be sad! The agricultural labourer and the farmer might then have some part of the game which they fatten with their labour. But what would happen to you in the season? No week-end shooting with the Duke of Norfolk or anyone. But that is not the kind of labour they are going to cut down. They are going to cut down productive labour—their builders and their gardeners—and they are going to ruin their property so that it shall not be taxed.

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All I can say is this—the ownership of land is not merely an enjoyment, it is a stewardship. It has been reckoned as such in the past, and if they cease to discharge their functions, the security and defence of the country, looking after the broken in their villages and in their neighbourhoods—then these functions which are part of the traditional duties attached to the ownership of land and which have given to it its title—if they cease to discharge those functions, the time will come to reconsider the conditions under which the land is held in this country. No country, however rich, can permanently afford to have quartered upon its revenue a class which declines to do the duty which it was called upon to perform since the beginning. And, therefore, it is one of the prime duties of statesmanship to investigate those conditions.

But I do not believe it. They have threatened and menaced like that before. They have seen that it is not to their interest to carry out these futile menaces. They are now protesting against paying their fair share of the taxation of the land, and they are doing so by saying: "You are burdening industry; you are putting burdens upon the people which they cannot bear." Ah! they are not thinking of themselves. Noble souls! It is not the great dukes they are feeling for, it is the market gardener, it is the builder, and it was, until recently, the smallholder. In every debate in the House of Commons they said: "We are not worrying for ourselves. We can afford it with our broad acres; but just think of the little man who has only got a few acres." And we were so very impressed with this tearful appeal that at last we said: "We will leave him out." And I almost expected to see Mr. Pretymann jump over the table when I said it—fall on my neck and embrace me. Instead of that, he stiffened up, his face wreathed with anger, and he said: "The Budget is more unjust than ever."

We are placing burdens on the broadest shoulders. Why should I put burdens on the people? I am one of the children of the people. I was brought up amongst them. I know their trials; and God forbid that I should add one grain of trouble to the anxieties which they bear with such patience and fortitude. When the Prime Minister did me the honour of inviting me to take charge of the National Exchequer at a time of great difficulty, I made up my mind, in framing the Budget which was in front of me, that at any rate no cupboard should be barer, no lot would be harder. By that test I challenge them to judge the Budget.

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